

**THE DISSEMINATION OF *ORLANDO  
FURIOSO*:**

**ARIOSTO AND HIS POEM IN SOUTHERN  
ITALY (1532-1599)**

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### **Declaration of authorship**

I Ambra Anelotti hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis focusses on the reception of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* in Southern Italy in the second half of the sixteenth century. By examining the appropriation and adaptation of the *Furioso* in three works wherein the poem has been transposed and tested against new genres and cultural domains, this study aims to shed light on the continued and significant role played by Ariosto's work even within cultural and geographical areas where it underwent a process of marginalisation.

Part One, the Introduction, deals with recent scholarship on the reception of *Orlando Furioso* and elaborates on key theoretical terms such as dissemination and adaptation in relation to Ariosto's afterlife in the sixteenth century. Part Two is dedicated to Marco Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto*, an Ovidian rewriting of Ariosto's characters, and explores the latter's transformation in the process of transposition from the romance genre to that of Ovidian epistolary elegy. Parts Three and Five focus on religious appropriations of the *Furioso*. After exploring practices of literary censorship, expurgation and religious rewriting, especially in relation to Ariosto's poem, Part Three examines Cristoforo Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto traslatato in spirituale*, a rewriting of Ariosto's first canto, and locates it in its Neapolitan context. Part Four reconstructs the varied and multifarious Sicilian reception and dissemination of *Orlando Furioso* in various genres, from lyrical poetry to music. Part Five explores the dialectical presence of Ariosto's romance in the religious rewriting of a Sicilian priest (Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale*).

This is the first critical work on Ariosto's reception which focusses specifically on Southern Italy, including both Naples and Sicily, thus shedding further light on sixteenth-century Italian literary culture. Through dissemination and adaptation Ariosto's romance continued to be culturally productive and thus a significant presence even within cultural and geographical areas where it underwent a process of marginalisation.

## NOTES ON TRANSCRIPTION

With regard to early modern texts, quotations are generally diplomatic transcriptions, and thus may be present irregularities. However, some changes have been made to aid the reader: the use of *u* and *v* has been standardised, the ampersand has always been replaced by *et*, the tilde has been resolved. Changes to punctuation, accents and apostrophes have been introduced to facilitate comprehension.

I refer to early modern editions of *Orlando furioso* by indicating the publisher and the year of publication (e.g. Giolito 1542), in order to improve readability. A full reference may be found in the bibliography.

Unless otherwise stated, in reporting figures and data regarding sixteenth-century editions and publications I refer to Edit16.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

### Dictionaries and databases:

*DBI: Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1960 -)

Edit16: *Censimento nazionale delle edizioni italiane del XVI secolo (EDIT16)*  
< [http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/web\\_iccu/imap.htm](http://edit16.iccu.sbn.it/web_iccu/imap.htm) >

*IAD: Italian Academies Database* <<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/ItalianAcademies/> >

*RePIM: Repertorio della Poesia Italiana in Musica, 1500-1700*  
<<http://repim.muspe.unibo.it/>>

### Literary works:

*Bc* Antonio Alfano, *La battaglia celeste tra Michele e Lucifero* (Palermo: Mayda, 1568)

*Fs* Vincenzo Marino, *Furioso spirituale distinto in tre libri con i cinque suoi canti al fine. Composto dal Padre Vincenzo Marino prete solitario della città di Messina* (Messina: Brea, 1596)

*Her* Ovid, *Le Eroidi*, ed. and trans. by Gabriella Leto (Turin: Einaudi, 1966)

*Inf.* *Inferno*, in Dante Alighieri, *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. by Giorgio Petrocchi, *Le opere di Dante Alighieri. Edizione nazionale a cura della Società dantesca italiana*, 7, 4 vols (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994)

- Lp* *Libro primu*, in Antonio Veneziano, *Libro delle rime siciliane*, ed. by Gaetana Maria Rinaldi (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 2012)
- Of* Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso*, ed. by Emilio Bigi and Cristina Zampese, 2nd edn (Milan: Bur, 2013)
- Os* Giulio Cornelio Graziano, *Di Orlando santo vita, et morte con ventimilla christiani uccisi in Roncisvalle; cavata dal catalogo de santi. Di Giulio Cornelio Gratiano libri otto. Novamente stampati. Con gli argomenti a ciascun libro d'incerto autore* (Treviso: Deuchino, 1597)
- Pal* Teofilo Folengo, *La palermitana*, ed. by Patrizia Sonia de Corso (Florence: Olschki, 2006)
- Pc* Cristoforo Scannello, *Primo canto dell'Ariosto. Tradotto in rime spirituali. Poste in luce per Christoforo Scannello detto il Cieco da Forlì* (Naples: Carlino and Pace, 1593)
- Rc* Giulio Cesare Croce, *Rime compassionevoli et devote sopra la Passione, Morte et resurrettione del N. Sig. Gesù Christo* (Bologna: Sebastiano Bonomi, 1620)
- TC* *Triumphus Cupidinis*, in Francesco Petrarch, *Trionfi*, ed. by Guido Bezzola (Milan: BUR, 2006)
- UfD* Teofilo Folengo, *L'Umanità del figliuolo di Dio*, ed. by Simona Gatti (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2000)
- VSC* Marco Filippi, *Vita di Santa Catherina vergine, e martire; nuovamente composta, per Marco Filippi, detto il Funesto. Et appresso, una operetta di sonetti, e canzoni spirituali, con alcune stanze della Magdalena a Christo; del medesimo autore* (Palermo: Mayda, 1562)

- abbreviations referring to individual letters in Marco Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto* (*Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto, in ottava rima di m. Marco Filippi soprannominato il funesto, da lui chiamate Epistole heroide, con alcun'altre rime dell'istesso Autore, et di don Ottavio Filippi suo figliuolo. Giontovi alcune rime del signor Giacomo Bosio all'illustre signor Gaspare Fardella baron di San Lorenzo* (Venice: Varisco: 1584):

BR	Bradamante to Ruggiero	A1 <sup>r</sup> -A5 <sup>r</sup>
GA	Ginevra to Ariodante	A5 <sup>v</sup> -B1 <sup>r</sup>
OB	Olimpia to Bireno	B1 <sup>v</sup> - B5 <sup>v</sup>
AR	Alcina to Ruggiero	B6 <sup>r</sup> -C1 <sup>v</sup>

IZ	Isabella to Zerbino	C2 <sup>r</sup> -C6 <sup>v</sup>
FR	Fiordispina to Ricciardetto	C7 <sup>r</sup> -D4 <sup>r</sup>
RA	Rinaldo to Angelica	D4 <sup>v</sup> -E2 <sup>r</sup>
SA	Sacripante to Angelica	E2 <sup>v</sup> -E5 <sup>v</sup>
RD:	Rodomonte to Doralice	E6 <sup>r</sup> -F2 <sup>r</sup>
FB	Fiordiligi to Brandimarte	F2 <sup>v</sup> -F6 <sup>r</sup>

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# PART ONE. INTRODUCTION

## 1. THE RECEPTION OF *ORLANDO FURIOSO* IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY AND SOUTHERN ITALY

[S]e voi praticate per le corti, se andate per le strade, se passeggiate per le piazze, se vi trovate ne' ridotti, se penetrate ne' Musei, mai non sentite altro, che o leggere o recitar l'Ariosto. Anzi che dico corti, che dico musei? Se nelle case private, nelle ville, ne' Tugurii stessi, et nelle capanne ancora si trova, et si canta continuamente il Furioso. Lascio stare che non sia scuola, nè studio, nè Accademia, dove non faccia conserva di questo mirabil poema. Ma diciam pure delle inculte villanelle, et delle rozze pastorelle.<sup>1</sup>

In his dialogue *Della nuova poesia. Overo delle difese del Furioso*, Giuseppe Malatesta writes of the great popularity of *Orlando furioso*, whose verses were read, recited or sung and circulated widely across different environments and social classes: the popularity of Ariosto's romance was socially intersectional, including courtly environments where its composition originated, academies where the Ariosto-Tasso debate developed, and popular crowds who listened to the declamation of Ariosto's verses by wandering street-singers. The popularity of *Orlando furioso* was indeed a significant feature of the reception of Ariosto's chivalric romance in the sixteenth century. This is reflected by the fact that the *Furioso* not only inspired theoretical discussions on the epic and romance genres, which culminated in the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle*, but also imitations, rewritings, music, and the visual arts.

The sixteenth-century reception of the *Furioso* was geographically diversified. In Naples and Sicily the presence of Ariosto's poem in literary culture appears minor when compared with Northern and Central Italy, where the chivalric tradition was well-established. This thesis will show that it was in fact also significant. The fact that Sicily and Naples were neighbouring viceroyalties of the Spanish empire was an important factor in terms of literary and cultural developments, as the Spanish power adopted a cultural policy that aimed at controlling the local aristocracy; both Sicily and Naples, moreover, were characterised by a strong local cultural and literary heritage. Significantly, it is in Naples that the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle* escalated, and in Naples Tasso found a cultural environment extremely favourable to his epic. In Sicily epic literary production developed only after the publication of the *Gerusalemme liberata* (1580) and followed in the footsteps of Tasso. At the same time, however, the *Furioso*

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<sup>1</sup> Giuseppe Malatesta, *Della nuova poesia. Overo delle difese del Furioso, dialogo* (Verona: Sebastiano delle Donne, 1589), I 5<sup>r</sup>-15<sup>v</sup>.

resurfaced in new forms and discourses beyond the romance and epic genres. This thesis focusses on the reception of Ariosto's romance in Naples and Sicily until 1599, when the Church last attempted to censor and expurgate it. Taking into account the mechanisms underpinning the reception of *Orlando furioso* that recent scholarship has brought to light, this thesis will explore responses to Ariosto's poem that have often been overlooked by criticism in order to reevaluate its presence in Southern literary culture and the dynamics in which it is grounded.

It is important to consider this sixteenth-century reception of *Orlando furioso* because the Cinquecento was a time of crucial developments in terms of literary culture in Italy. As proposed by Pietro Bembo, the Petrarchan model became widely accepted as the single model for imitation in vernacular poetry, which prompted Ariosto to alter his romance to make it conform to Bembo's stylistic recommendations; a Neo-Aristotelian approach to literature led to an impulse to define and categorise literary genres, including particularly the epic and romance ones; as a response to Luther's Reformation, the Counter-Reformation promoted especially by the Council of Trent (1545-1563) had a huge impact upon Italian culture and the literary development of the late Cinquecento, as exemplified by Torquato Tasso's works. His epic *Gerusalemme liberata* (1580), which was composed and revised according to Aristotelian rules and the new religious climate, was significantly compared and contrasted with Ariosto's romance, whose revision and expurgation, though ultimately never carried out, was officially ordered by the Congregation of the Index.

This introduction begins by mapping cultural and historical influences on the reception of *Orlando furioso* in the Cinquecento before going on to consider important mechanisms and dynamics that underpin it, such as canonisation and allegorisation. It focusses on the relevant factors that particularly shaped the reception of the romance in Southern Italy. Finally, taking into account this background, I will discuss the key concepts of dissemination and adaptation and their theoretical pertinence to this thesis.

In his *Prose della volgar lingua* (1525)<sup>2</sup>, Pietro Bembo laid out his theory of literary imitation by proposing the imitation of a single model and indicating Petrarch for poetry and Boccaccio for prose, due to the prominence of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and Boccaccio's *Decameron* in the Italian vernacular tradition. By recommending Trecento Tuscan as the only linguistic and literary model, Bembo codified the Italian literary language and essentially contributed to its standardisation, which was facilitated

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<sup>2</sup> Pietro Bembo, *Prose [...] nelle quali si ragiona della volgar lingua [...]* (Venice: Tacuino, 1525).

also by the printing press. Due to its being supralocal and national in character, the literary model proposed by Bembo easily established itself in Italy, including Naples and Sicily, giving rise to the widespread imitation of Petrarch known as Petrarchism. As pointed out by Stefano Jossa, setting up the superiority of a single model resulted in imitation being based on rigorous and selective norms; at the same time, as his *Canzoniere* was read as ‘an autobiographical narrative containing a spiritual journey from earthly to divine love’,<sup>3</sup> Petrarch developed into a site not only for self-expression but also for other discourses alien to Petrarch’s.<sup>4</sup>

By the 1530s, the debate on imitation that had characterised the previous humanistic era subsided, due to the general acceptance of Bembo’s single-model proposal; imitation became more rigidly codified, while a new tendency to exhibit artifice and elaborate wordplay began to emerge, especially in the late Cinquecento.<sup>5</sup> Significantly, Thomas Greene has indicated Giordano Bruno’s *Degli eroici furori* (1585) as the end point for the history of imitation theory in Renaissance Italy.<sup>6</sup> More recently, Martin McLaughlin has defined Bembo’s as ‘the last decisive contribution to the imitation debate in Italy’,<sup>7</sup> and pointed out that, while the debate continued, it was influenced by Aristotelianism and became theoretical.<sup>8</sup> In late 1530s, in fact, a new urge arose towards the elaboration of a critical system for contemporary literature. Especially influenced by Aristotle’s *Poetics*, this approach aimed at strictly regulating the literary system in critical and theoretical terms. The genres of epic and romance, in particular, became objects of contention, starting with Giraldis Cinzio’s *Discorso intorno al comporre dei romanzi* (1554) and Pigna’s *I romanzi* (1554).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Stefano Jossa, ‘Bembo and Italian Petrarchism’, in *Cambridge Companion to Petrarch*, ed. by Albert Russell Ascoli and Unn Falkeid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 193-200 (p. 193).

<sup>4</sup> Jossa, ‘Bembo and Italian Petrarchism’, in *Cambridge Companion to Petrarch*, ed. by Ascoli and Falkeid, p. 193. For the reception of Petrarch in social and political terms see William J. Kennedy, *The Site of Petrarchism: Early Modern National Sentiment in Italy, France, and England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion on the concept of literary mannerism see Amedeo Quondam, *Problemi del manierismo* (Naples: Guida, 1975).

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 180-181. Giordano Bruno, [...] *De gl’heroic furori* (Paris: Baio, 1585).

<sup>7</sup> Martin McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: the Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 272.

<sup>8</sup> McLaughlin, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Giovanni Battista Pigna, *I romanzi di m. Giovan Battista Pigna divisi in tre libri. Ne’ quali della poesia, et della vita dell’Ariosto con nuovo modo si tratta* (Venice: Valgrisi, 1554). Giovanni Battista Giraldis *Discorsi di m. Giovambattista Giraldis Cinthio nobile ferrarese [...] intorno al comporre de i romanzi, delle comedie, e delle tragedie, e di altre maniere di poesie. [...]* (Venice: Giolito, 1554). For the dispute between Giraldis Cinzio and Pigna see Stefano Jossa, *La fondazione di un genere: il poema eroico tra Ariosto e Tasso* (Rome: Carocci, 2002).

Thus, in the second half of the Cinquecento, the reception of the *Furioso* was strongly influenced by Aristotelian criticism: Ariosto's romance was chiefly criticised for its lack of unity and narrative discontinuity, Ariosto's authorial interventions and the lack of decorum of his characters. The debate about the romance and epic genres finally culminated with the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle* when Camillo Pellegrino's dialogue *Il Carrafa, o vero dell'epica poesia* (1584) in defence of Tasso polarised the ongoing dispute. Pellegrino's work sparked the reaction of the Florentine Accademia della Crusca in defence of Ariosto and, in the same year, Leonardo Salviati and his fellow Accademici della Crusca replied to Pellegrino in *Degli Accademici della Crusca Difesa dell'Orlando Furioso dell'Ariosto. Contra 'l dialogo dell'epica poesia di Cammillo Pellegrino. Stacciata prima*, which was followed by a series of mutual responses.<sup>10</sup> An epic conforming to Aristotelian principles, Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581) was contrasted with Ariosto's chivalric romance by supporters of either Ariosto or Tasso. It is particularly after the publication, in Naples, of the Neapolitan Pellegrino's dialogue that Naples became an important scenario in terms of the reception of the *Furioso*.

Together with Aristotelianism, the Counter-Reformation promoted by the Council of Trent (1545-1563) also contributed to the criticism of the romance, whose popularity attracted the attention of censors though the *Furioso* was never put on the Index. As Catholic doctrine was clarified and reorganised in a more active opposition to Protestant ideas, 'Trent equipped the Church with a solid body of defined doctrine and a code of reform that provided the essential inspiration for the Catholic renewal in Early Modern Europe'.<sup>11</sup> A major consequence of such a project of renewal was the publication of the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (the Tridentine Index) in 1564, which was followed by another in 1596 (the Clementine Index). Though the main targets of censorship and prohibition were religious works deemed heretical and unauthorised editions of the Bible and its vernacular translations, the necessity of stopping and containing far-spreading heretical thinking made it necessary as well as inevitable to extend the policy of censorship to everything which was printed, published and sold, including literary works. Criticism of Ariosto increased especially after Tasso's *Liberata* provided the model of a vernacular epic compliant with Aristotelian principles as well as with the new religious

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<sup>10</sup> See Weinberg for a survey of the debate on Ariosto and Tasso: Bernard Weinberg, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), II, pp. 954-1073. On the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle* see also the works by Daniel Javitch, Klaus Hempfer and Francesco Sberlati that are discussed below.

<sup>11</sup> Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 68.

sentiment.<sup>12</sup> An extremely popular romance, the *Furioso* was scrutinised from a religious censorial standpoint but ultimately never prohibited.

Furthermore, realising the difficulties of a strict policy of prohibition, the Church allowed the publication of certain works only after they were cleansed of the elements considered offensive to Catholic morality. Expurgation was part of a strategy aiming at making works considered dangerous fit for the Reformed Catholic audience. Boccaccio's *Decameron* is the most exemplary case, as the collection of *novelle* was revised and expurgated three times, in 1573, 1582, and 1588. A practice parallel to expurgation was spiritualisation, that is, the religious recasting of profane works. Based on Girolamo Malipiero's rewriting of Petrarch, the *Petrarca spirituale* (1536), the practice of spiritualising literary classics developed especially in the last two decades of the Cinquecento, when canonical profane works such as the *Decameron* were rewritten by individual rewriters by replacing their original narrative and themes with religious ones deemed morally suitable.<sup>13</sup> Besides established models like Petrarch and Boccaccio, also Ariosto's poem was rewritten from a new religious perspective.

After this brief overview of the main factors shaping the reception of the *Furioso* in the sixteenth century, it is now necessary to consider the dynamics underpinning it in relation with the cultural developments of the period. A chivalric romance whose composition developed in the Este court of Ferrara, *Orlando furioso* was first published in 1516; its second edition, in 1521, enjoyed a great success and was followed by a third and last one in 1532, which was by far the most successful.<sup>14</sup> Printed in different formats for a diverse audience, Ariosto's poem was accompanied by a critical apparatus of variable extension depending on the edition. Such apparatuses often included summaries and allegorical interpretations of each canto, as well as indexes and lists of references aimed at orienting the reader. Significantly, in his seminal study on the reception of the *Furioso* in the Cinquecento, Daniel Javitch has focussed on such critical apparatuses and commentaries and has shown that they contributed substantially to the promotion of the classical pedigree of the *Furioso*. Pointing to a project of legitimization of the romance set forth in various mid-century editions, Javitch argues that the romance was given the canonical

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<sup>12</sup> A first incomplete edition of fourteen cantos was published in 1580 (*Il Goffredo di Torquato Tasso*, Venice: Cavalcalupo), the official one authorised by the author in 1581 (printed by Erasmo Viotti in Parma).

<sup>13</sup> Francesco Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale* (Venice: Varisco, 1594).

<sup>14</sup> Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando furioso* (Ferrara: Mazzocco del Bondeno, 1516); *Orlando furioso di Ludovico Ariosto ristampato et con molta diligentia da lui corretto*. (Ferrara: Giovanni Battista da la Pigna, 1521); *Orlando furioso di messer Ludovico Ariosto [...] nuovamente da lui proprio corretto e d'altri canti nuovi ampliato con gratie e privilegi* (Ferrara: Francesco Rosso da Valenza, 1532). The 1521 edition was printed 15 times between 1521 and 1532; significantly, 10 of these were printed in Venice. The *Furioso* was printed 148 times between 1532 and 1599.

status of a modern classic, especially through its allegorisation, domestication, and adoption in educational environments. That the *Furioso* became a classic was evident also from the fact that Ludovico Dolce and Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara both contaminated their translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with Ariosto's poem: the affiliation of Ariosto's romance with classical epic models was a crucial strategy of legitimisation.<sup>15</sup>

The significance of the critical apparatuses of the *Furioso* in terms of its reception has been noted also by Klaus Hempfer, who has focussed on the contradictory responses to the poem. According to Hempfer, such responses resulted from the fact that the poem could not be consistently assimilated to one poetic concept of literary genre. Its affiliation with classical epic implied the necessary presence of contradictions or the annihilation of those features inconsistent with the value system underpinning the interpretation of the text: its discrepant readings and interpretations are therefore grounded in such strategies of annihilation.<sup>16</sup> While Javitch and Hempfer approach the reception of *Orlando furioso* from very different perspectives,<sup>17</sup> they both show that, even as many different social, editorial, and literary forces operated towards establishing Ariosto's romance as a modern classic, the poem itself provided a very fertile ground for conflicting interpretations.

In the aftermath of the studies of Javitch and Hempfer, scholarly criticism has directed its attention to the exegetical and iconographic apparatuses of the editions of the *Furioso* and its visual representation. A recently created online database cataloguing visual representations of the romance up until the eighteenth century includes the allegories, woodcuts and images framing the text in four Cinquecento Venetian editions (Zoppino 1536, Giolito 1542, Valvassori 1553 and Valgrisi 1556) and a section dedicated to artworks inspired by the poem.<sup>18</sup> The focus on the relationship between text and images has resulted in the identification of significant dynamics underpinning the poem's reception. Exploring the function of illustrations and images as a grid that aimed to direct

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic: the Canonization of 'Orlando Furioso'* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991). Giovanni Andrea Dell'Anguillara, *Le metamorfosi di Ovidio dette [...] in ottava rima* (Venice: Giovanni Griffio, 1553). Ludovico Dolce, *Le trasformationi di m. Lodovico Dolce* (Venice: Giolito, 1553).

<sup>16</sup> Klaus Hempfer, *Lecture discrepanti. La ricezione dell' 'Orlando Furioso' nel Cinquecento. Lo studio della ricezione storica come euristica dell'interpretazione*, trans. by Hans Honnacker (Modena: Panini, 2004). Originally published: Klaus Hempfer, *Diskrepante Lektüren: die Orlando-Furioso-Rezeption im Cinquecento. Historische Rezeptionsforschung als Heuristik der Interpretation*, Text und Kontext. Romanische Literaturen und allgemeine Literaturwissenschaft, 2. (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1987).

<sup>17</sup> While Hempfer has focussed his discussion on features intrinsic to the text, Javitch has explored the interpretation and manipulation of the *Furioso* by its readers, viewing the canonisation of the poem as an extra-textual process; the two positions are not mutually exclusive, as acknowledged by Javitch himself (Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic*, pp. 4-5).

<sup>18</sup> [www.orlandofurioso.org](http://www.orlandofurioso.org) [accessed 17 September 2017].

the reading and interpretation of the poem, the essays in the rich volume *L'Orlando Furioso nello specchio delle immagini* show how illustrating the text was a means of controlling it.<sup>19</sup> The examination of the iconographical apparatuses has revealed the multiple perspectives through which the poem was translated into images; such an operation was strictly connected with its moralising and allegorical reading, a traditional approach through which the classical tradition was made compatible with Christian principles. Thus, the amorous episodes were relegated to the background in the Giolito edition, the erotic aspect of the episodes was generally omitted, and the illustrations of the De' Franceschi edition were influenced by Aristotelian principles.<sup>20</sup>

The translation of the poem into images played a significant role also in terms of imitation and productive reception. Allegorisation crucially contributed to the disassembling of the text into images that could be appropriated through the art of memory, as demonstrated by Lina Bolzoni. In her seminal study *The Gallery of Memory*, Bolzoni has drawn attention to the importance of images in terms of poetic creativity. By being made visible, knowledge was made accessible and reusable: cultural memory was encapsulated in images that could be rearranged in the process of poetic creation. Taking into account Orazio Toscanella's commentary on *Orlando furioso* (1574), Bolzoni observes that Ariosto's poem was 'dismantled and divided into a series of places in which exemplary and memorable images are positioned'.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the *Furioso* became a set of images that could be reused creatively for a variety of new compositions. Significantly, moreover, Bolzoni has also pointed out that the literary and iconographic canons were established and defined together: if 'the play of similarities among mental processes, literary experience, and artistic practice has become truly dazzling'<sup>22</sup> by the sixteenth century, then the reduction to images of the *Furioso* further facilitated its dissemination.

Within the sixteenth-century discussion on poetics and genres, Ariosto's romance and Tasso's epic acted as platforms for the criticism and defence of very different and often conflicting views of the significance and value of poetry, as noted by Francesco Sberlati.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *L'Orlando Furioso nello specchio delle immagini*, ed. by Lina Bolzoni (Rome: Istituto della enciclopedia italiana Treccani, 2014).

<sup>20</sup> I refer in particular to Carlo Alberto Girotto, '“Ariosto d'oro e figurato”: le principali edizioni illustrate del Cinquecento', in *L'Orlando Furioso nello specchio delle immagini*, ed. by Lina Bolzoni, pp. 1-34, and, in the same volume, Nicola Catelli, 'L'“amorse reti”: le immagini dell'eros nelle edizioni cinquecentesche', pp. 109-140; Giovanna Rizzarelli, 'Vedere il tempo: strategie narrative nelle illustrazioni', in pp. 141-182.

<sup>21</sup> Lina Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press*, trans. by Jeremy Parzen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), p. 207. Originally published: Lina Bolzoni, *La stanza della memoria. Modelli letterari e iconografici nell'età della stampa*. (Turin: Einaudi, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Bolzoni, p. 217.

<sup>23</sup> *Il genere e la disputa: la poetica tra Ariosto e Tasso* (Rome: Bulzoni, 2001).



Sberlati, who stresses the significance of Aristotelian principles as criteria for criticism from an early stage, points out the synergy between the status of *auctoritas* bestowed upon Aristotle, and the Catholic Counter-Reformation, both characterised by a strong normative tendency. The consequence of this correspondence was that literature was charged with a hidden value that was of fundamental importance for Counter-Reformation culture, and the worldview expressed by Ariosto waned after the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, while Tasso's poem remained in a precarious and unstable position.<sup>24</sup> If by the second half of the Cinquecento the *Furioso* was considered a romance exhibiting the poetic product in a continuum of recombining materials,<sup>25</sup> by the end of the century Ariosto and Tasso had become 'schemi complementari di ridescrizione metaforica del mondo'.<sup>26</sup>

Recent scholarship has also challenged the notion that the relation between Ariosto and Tasso, romance and epic, should be considered one of simple opposition. Sergio Zatti has viewed Tasso's poem as an intersection of the conflicting relations between the epic and romance codes, demonstrating the ambiguity of the relationship between the two poems.<sup>27</sup> Adopting Harold Bloom's theory of the anxiety of influence, he argues that in the *Liberata* the romance code, associated with the infernal dimension of Satan, is, in fact, integrated into the epic one as a tempting Other that is never completely repressed.<sup>28</sup> Focussing on the Cinquecento debate around the epic and romance genres and their developments, Jossa has noted that the relationship between Ariosto and Tasso was more of a co-presence than a rivalry.<sup>29</sup> By the end of the century, then, reading Tasso meant necessarily reading Ariosto and vice versa, as each was representative of a poetic world interdependent with the other. However ambiguous, the established association between the two poems ensured the continuous significant presence of the *Furioso* in literary culture. Ariosto's romance continued to have a significant role in sixteenth-century Italian culture.

While the reception of *Orlando furioso* in sixteenth-century Italy was influenced by a variety of elements, in Southern Italy some particular factors had a significant impact,

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<sup>24</sup> Sberlati, pp. 13-15.

<sup>25</sup> Sberlati, p. 87.

<sup>26</sup> Sberlati, p. 288.

<sup>27</sup> Sergio Zatti, *L'ombra del Tasso. Epica e romanzo nel Cinquecento* (Milan: Mondadori, 1996). Chapters 1 and 2 are translated into English in Sergio Zatti, *The Quest for Epic. From Ariosto to Tasso*, ed. by Dennis Looney, trans. by Sally Hill and Dennis Looney, intr. by Albert Russell Ascoli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> On the anxiety of influence see Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: a Poetic Theory*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

<sup>29</sup> Jossa, *La fondazione di un genere...*, p. 16.

including the lack of publications of the *Furioso*, the lack of an indigenous romance tradition, the fact that Ariosto's romance appeared as a foreign import in a cultural context distinguished by a strong local tradition, and the preference for Tasso's epic. In Naples, after an initial phase of enthusiasm for Ariosto's romance in the 1530s-40s, the social and intellectual conditions of the Neapolitan cultural elites and the policy of strict cultural control of both the secular and religious powers significantly influenced the reception of the *Furioso*. As noted above, only with the publication of Pellegrino's *Carrafa* in 1584 did Naples become an important setting in the ongoing debate on the epic and romance genres, which was fostered by academic rivalries, and the preference for the *Liberata* expressed by Pellegrino was generally shared by Neapolitan literati. In Sicily, which was a Spanish dependency like Naples, the *Furioso* did not inspire a romance production, and Sicilian academies, which were peripheral in terms of the contemporary literary debate, favoured Tasso over Ariosto.

Due to its success, the *Furioso* inspired a production of romances that revolved around, continued or added to the matter of Ariosto's. Chivalric romances influenced by Ariosto started to appear from the first edition of the *Furioso*; promoted by printers and editors due to the popularity of the genre, such production increased especially from the mid-sixteenth century. However, in her survey of chivalric romances printed in the period 1470-1600, Marina Beer has noted that this production appears confined to Northern Italy, as the main publishing centres were Venice, Milan and Florence.<sup>30</sup> Recent scholarship supports Beer's observations. Giancarlo Alfano's analysis of the literary production in *ottava rima* from the late Quattrocento to the Ottocento also points to a geographical difference between North and Central Italy and Southern Italy. Alfano's survey confirms the preeminence of Venice, Milan and Florence with regard to the production of chivalric romances; moreover, the *Furioso* was not printed in Naples nor in Sicily, while Tasso's *Liberata* was printed across the peninsula. Significantly, Naples became a major production centre of heroic poems after Venice and Rome in the following century, and heroic poems were printed also in Messina and Palermo.<sup>31</sup>

It is noteworthy that the *Furioso* was greatly appreciated in Naples at an early stage. In his recent contribution, Gianluca Genovese has stressed the early canonisation of the *Furioso* as a '*quarta corona*' of the Italian language in the 1530s and 1540s, referring in

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<sup>30</sup> Marina Beer, *Romanzi di cavalleria* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1587), p. 234. The poems of Ariosto, Boiardo and Tasso are excluded from her survey. Beer also provides a table with the publishing place of chivalric romances, in which Naples appears only twice and Sicily is completely absent (pp. 390-392).

<sup>31</sup> Giancarlo Alfano, 'Una forma per tutti gli usi: l'ottava rima', in *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, ed. by Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà (Turin: Einaudi, 2010), 3 vols, II, pp. 31-56. See in particular the graphs and maps at pp. 36-37, 39-40, 48, 50.

particular to Benedetto di Falco's *Rimario* and Fabrizio Luna's *Vocabulario di cinquemila vocabuli toschi non men oscuri che utili e necessari del Furioso, Bocaccio, Petrarca e Dante* [...].<sup>32</sup> Ariosto's poem was put on a par with the Trecento Tuscan models indicated by Bembo. It is noteworthy that in Naples, Bembo as a model was always associated with Sannazaro, the representative of a strong local Neapolitan tradition; this resulted in a dichotomy Bembo-Sannazaro, and in what Paolo Sabbatino has called a 'linea autoctona e regionale'.<sup>33</sup> With regard to Luna, moreover, Tobia Toscano has suggested that the *Vocabulario* was connected to the small court gravitating around Vittoria Colonna at Ischia.<sup>34</sup> A key presence for Neapolitan cultural life in the 1530s, Colonna and her family are notably praised by Ariosto in the *Furioso*.<sup>35</sup>

As the presence of Dante in the works of Di Falco and Luna shows, both distanced themselves from Bembo, who indicated Petrarch as the single model for poetry: the *Furioso* entered an eclectic canon that reflected local interests.<sup>36</sup> Also in Sicily Bembo's Tuscan model was met by a cultural environment distinguished by a strong local tradition, represented by the Sicilian School, the group of poets at the court of Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen and his son Manfred (1166-1266), which influenced the literary production of the island. This will be discussed especially in relation to the Sicilian reception of the *Furioso* in the part of this dissertation dedicated to Sicily.

The most important Neapolitan contribution to the canonisation of *Orlando furioso* was Laura Terracina's *Discorso sopra tutti li primi canti di Orlando furioso*, which was followed by a second *Discorso* in 1567; in the former she reworked the beginning of each canto of the romance and in the latter the second stanzas of each canto.<sup>37</sup> Terracina's

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<sup>32</sup> Gianluca Genovese, 'Ariosto a Napoli. Vicende della ricezione del *Furioso* negli anni Trenta e Quaranta del Cinquecento', in ' "Tra mille carte vive ancora" '. *Ricezione del 'Furioso' tra immagini e parole*, ed. by Lina Bolzoni, Serena Pezzini, Giovanna Rizzarelli (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 2010), pp. 339-356. See also his 'Appunti sulla ricezione cinquecentesca del *Furioso* a Napoli', *Annali dell'Università Suor Orsola Benincasa*, 2, 17 (2009), 807-820. On Luna's sources see Erika Milburn, 'La biblioteca di Fabrizio Luna: nell'officina di un lessicografo del Cinquecento', *Letteratura italiana antica*, 8 (2007), 424-457. *Rimario del Falco* (Naples: Mattia Cancer, 1535). Fabrizio Luna, *Vocabulario di cinquemila vocabuli toschi non men oscuri che utili e necessari del Furioso, Bocaccio, Petrarca e Dante* [...] (Naples: Sultzbach, 1536).

<sup>33</sup> Pasquale Sabbatino, *Il modello bembiano a Napoli nel Cinquecento* (Naples: Ferraro, 1986), p. 15.

<sup>34</sup> On Luna and Alfonso d'Avalos see Tobia R. Toscano, *Letterati corti accademie: la letteratura a Napoli nella prima metà del Cinquecento* (Naples: Loffredo, 2000), pp. 117-120.

<sup>35</sup> On Colonna's presence in the *Furioso* see Toscano, *Letterati corti accademie*, pp. 105-108; and Ippolita di Majo, 'Fantasie ariostesche sulla rocca dei d'Avalos a Ischia', in *Renaissance Studies in Honor of Joseph Connors*, ed. by Machtelt Israëls and Louis A. Waldman, 2 vols (Florence: Villa I Tatti, 2013), I, pp. 421-429. It is noteworthy that Colonna's was not the only cultural circle in Naples in that period: a smaller but important one was that of Giulia Gonzaga, host to a group of intellectuals whose main leader was the religious reformer Juan Valdes.

<sup>36</sup> On the Di Falco and Luna's opposition to Bembo see Sabbatino, *Il modello bembiano*..., pp. 31-42.

<sup>37</sup> Laura Terracina, *Discorso sopra tutti li primi canti d'Orlando furioso* [...] (Venice: Giolito, 1549); *La prima [seconda] parte de' discorsi sopra le prime [-seconde] stanze de' canti d'Orlando furioso*, [...] (Venice: Valvassori, 1567). On Terracina's bio-biographical profile see *Italian Women Writers: A Bio-bibliographical Sourcebook*, ed. by Rinaldina Russell (Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), pp. 423. On

cantos are comprised of a dedicatory stanza followed by seven stanzas, each ending with a verse from an octave from Ariosto's poem. In her *Discorsi*, characterised by the poetic blending of Petrarch and Ariosto, Terracina dedicates each canto to a different dedicatee and reinterprets the poems of the *Furioso* in a celebratory and moralising manner. Significantly, Terracina's first *Discorso* was published by Giolito and her second by Valvassori, two major Venetian publishers whose editorial strategy aimed at moralising and legitimising the *Furioso*, as noted by Genovese.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, Terracina's lyrical production features *ottava rima* laments in the voices of Ariosto's characters.

A prolific poetess,<sup>39</sup> Terracina was a member of the Neapolitan Accademia degli Incogniti together with Di Falco. The academy, however, was closed in 1547: all Neapolitan academies were closed by the Viceroy Pedro de Toledo in 1547, when his attempt to introduce the Spanish Inquisition into the Kingdom failed due to the protest of Neapolitan barons, as they were seen as groups of possible resistance to Spanish authority.<sup>40</sup> Afterwards, because of suspicions of rebellion as well as the subordinate condition of the nobility they were connected to, Neapolitan academies had troubled and often short lives throughout the century; in the Seicento their development was strictly connected with the viceregal power.<sup>41</sup>

As we have seen, despite the early appreciation for the *Furioso*, in the map of the reception of Ariosto Naples features as essentially pro-Tasso. Amedeo Quondam has associated such preference with the distinguishing features of Neapolitan literary culture, particularly its lyrical mannerism.<sup>42</sup> Quondam follows in the footsteps of Ezio Raimondi, whose seminal contribution has highlighted the peculiarity of Southern lyric poetry.

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her use of the *Furioso* as a platform for expressing her female perspective see Deanna Shemek, *Ladies Errant: Wayward Women and Social Order in Early Modern Italy* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 126-157. Paola Cosentino has pointed out Terracina's moralisation of Ariosto's themes: Paola Cosentino, 'Sulla fortuna dei proemi ariosteschi: il *Discorso sopra al principio di tutti i canti d'Orlando Furioso* di Laura Terracina', *Collection de l'écrit*, 10 (2005), 133-152.

<sup>38</sup> Genovese, 'Ariosto a Napoli', p. 354.

<sup>39</sup> Without counting the *Discorso*, which was by far her most successful work, Terracina composed at least 6 books of rime.

<sup>40</sup> On Neapolitan academies and cultural life in the first half of the Cinquecento I refer to Tobia R. Toscano, *Letterati corti accademie*. With regard to Neapolitan academic environments until the Settecento see Paolo Izzo, *Le uova dell'angelo: accademie ed accademici a Napoli dalle origini al secolo dei lumi* (Napoli: Stamperia del Valentino, 2002).

<sup>41</sup> Pedro de Toledo's also established the viceregal control over the print industry, and particularly over the publishing of books not just of religious matter but of any kind. Both the political and religious powers, the vicerealty and the Church, significantly exerted cultural control on the print industry, and therefore over literary culture, through censorship. With regard to print and censorship in Naples, see Lopez, *Inquisizione, stampa e censura nel Regno di Napoli fra '500 e '600* (Naples: Edizioni del Delfino, 1974); on Toledo's religious policy see particularly pp. 29-39.

<sup>42</sup> Amedeo Quondam, *La parola nel labirinto: società e scrittura del manierismo a Napoli* (Bari: Laterza, 1975). For an analysis of lyrical mannerism in Naples see Amedeo Quondam and Giulio Ferroni, *La 'locuzione artificiosa'. Teoria ed esperienza della lirica a Napoli nell'età del manierismo* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1973).

According to Raimondi, besides the ‘disposizione pittorica, orchestrata su registri pastosi e patetici’,<sup>43</sup> Southern Petrarchism is characterised by an epigrammatic or madrigalesque structure.<sup>44</sup> Quondam associates such peculiar features with the socio-political conditions of Naples, where mannerism was connected with the process of ‘re-feudalization’ that was the core policy of the Spanish power. As a consequence, the text is reduced to its ‘funzionalità sociomondana’.<sup>45</sup> In Quondam’s view, Neapolitan poetic mannerism crucially contributed toward establishing the preference for Tasso over Ariosto.

Aristotle’s *Poetics* was also a significant influence: in his *Arte poetica* (1563), Antonio Minturno, Bishop of Ugento, espoused the Neo-Aristotelian claims that the romance does not constitute a poetic genre in itself but a transgression of the eternal rules of poetics.<sup>46</sup> Paolo Sabbatino has defined Pellegrino’s *Carrafa* as a ‘proposta di decodificazione aristotelica dell’epica’,<sup>47</sup> noting the adoption of Tasso as model for Southern literary culture as opposed to the Tuscan Ariosto. Such a development was stimulated also by Tasso’s sojourns in Naples (in 1588, 1592 and 1594), where he found an enthusiastic promoter in Giovan Battista Manso, member of the Accademia degli Svegliati (1586-1593). Around Manso, who was Tasso’s host and first biographer, gathered a group of poets and literati that in 1611 formed the Accademia degli Oziosi, sponsored by the Viceroy Pedro Fernandez de Castro, Count of Lemos.<sup>48</sup>

However, the preference accorded to Tasso did not automatically imply the eradication of Ariosto. The literary production of Tommaso Costo is especially representative of the complex relationship between Ariosto and Tasso as poetic models. A member of the Svegliati like Manso, Tommaso Costo wrote an *ottava rima* epic poem on the battle of Lepanto, *La rotta di Lepanto* (1573), which was influenced by Ariosto’s model; he later re-elaborated it in *La vittoria della lega* (1582), and edited Tasso’s *Liberata*. As noted by Stefania Capuozzo, the *Vittoria* was published the same year as Costo’s edition of the *Liberata*, which influenced the re-elaboration of the *Rotta*: the *Vittoria* was then characterised by the co-presence of both models, proving that Ariosto’s legacy was

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<sup>43</sup> Ezio Raimondi, ‘Il petrarchismo nell’Italia meridionale’, in *Atti del Convegno internazionale sul tema: Premarinismo e Pregongorismo, Roma, 19-20 aprile 1971* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1973), pp. 45-123 (p. 95).

<sup>44</sup> Raimondi, pp. 45-123.

<sup>45</sup> Quondam, *La locuzione...*, p. 232.

<sup>46</sup> *L’arte poetica del sig. Antonio Minturno, nella quale si contengono i precetti heroici, tragici, comici, satyrici, e d’ogni altra poesia [...]* (Venice: Valvassori, 1563). On Minturno’s work see Weinberg, II, pp. 755-759, 971-973.

<sup>47</sup> Sabbatino, pp. 173-198.

<sup>48</sup> *Vita di Torquato Tasso [...]* (Venice: Deuchino, 1621). About Manso see Floriana Calitti, ‘Manso, Giovan Battista’, in *DBI*, LXIX (2007). pp. 148-152.

inseparable from, and survived through, Tasso's.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, to the *Vittoria* was attached *Il pianto di Ruggiero*, which rewrites the episode of Ruggiero and Leone narrated in the last two cantos of the *Furioso*. In her analysis of Costo's rewriting, Capuozzo has pointed out the abundant echoes and references to Ariosto's text and narrative as well as the centrality of the theme of lament, suggesting that the *Pianto* was influenced by Tansillo's *Lacrime di San Pietro*.<sup>50</sup> Tansillo's unfinished work, in fact, was edited by Giovan Battista Attendolo in 1585 and Costo in 1606; while Attendolo altered the text to conform to Tasso's poetics, Costo did so to restore Ariosto's influences.<sup>51</sup>

The reception of the *Furioso* in Sicily bears some significant similarities with that in Naples: both Kingdoms lacked a tradition of chivalric romances, and in both cases Ariosto's romance appeared as a product of cultural and literary import and was eventually put aside in favour of Tasso's epic. However, the situation of the Kingdom of Sicily was slightly different compared with Naples. In her recent contribution on Sicilian academic environments, Delphine Montoliu has pointed out that, while in Naples and Milan the Spanish imposed their political institutions, Sicily retained its traditional ones. Furthermore, while in the Kingdom of Naples the capital city, Naples, was the main cultural, political and economic centre, in Sicily Palermo was the political capital, while Messina, as the seat of the mint, was the economic one, and Catania was home to the oldest University on the island. Promoted by the Habsburgs' policy, the rivalry between these cities resulted in an academic movement that was not restricted to one major centre.<sup>52</sup> Finally, another important difference was due to the fact that, while in Naples the introduction of the Spanish Inquisition was successfully opposed by the local barons,

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<sup>49</sup> Stefania Capuozzo, 'Lepanto tra Ariosto e Tasso', *Studi Rinascimentali*, 10 (2012), 57-78. Torquato Tasso, *La Gierusalemme liberata [...] Di nuovo ristampata, e da infiniti errori [...] corretta per Tomaso Costo. Aggiuntovi alcune annotationi di m. Giulio Cesare Capaccio* (Naples: Giovan Battista Cappelli, 1582). On Costo's epic poetry see also Claudio Gigante, *Esperienze di filologia cinquecentesca: Salviati, Mazzoni, Trissino, Costo, il Bargeo, Tasso*, Studi e Saggi, XIX (Rome: Salerno, 2003), pp. 80-95, and on Costo's classicism Quondam and Ferroni, pp. 227-246.

<sup>50</sup> Stefania Capuozzo, 'Variazioni su un tema ariostesco: il *Pianto di Ruggiero* di Tommaso Costo', *Filologia e Critica*, 1 (2008), 120-137.

<sup>51</sup> Tobia R. Toscano, 'Note sulla composizione e pubblicazione de *Le Lagrime di San Pietro* di Luigi Tansillo (con inediti)', in *Rinascimento meridionale e altri studi: in onore di Mario Santoro*, ed. by Maria Cristina Cafisse and others (Napoli: SEN, 1987), pp. 437-461. Toscano also noted that the composition of Tansillo's poem dated back to as early as 1539. Luigi Tansillo, *Le lagrime di san Pietro [...]* (Vico Equense: Giuseppe Cacchi e Giovan Battista Cappelli, 1585). *Lagrime di San Pietro [...] cavate dal suo proprio originale, [...]* (Venice: Barezzo Barezzi, 1606).

<sup>52</sup> Delphine Montoliu, 'Accademie siciliane 1400-1701: una nuova bancadati bio-bibliografica', in *The Italian Academies, 1525-1700. Networks of Culture, Innovation and Dissent*, ed. by Jane E. Everson, Denis V. Reidy and Lisa Sampson (Oxford: Legenda, 2016), pp. 306-315 (pp. 306-307). Montoliu's research resulted in the creation of a database of Sicilian academies (1400-1701): *Accademie siciliane nel regno asburgico (1400-1701)* <<http://blogs.univ-tlse2.fr/lineaeditoriale/banche-di-dati/>> [accessed: 9 April 2017].

in Sicily it had been established since 1487.<sup>53</sup> In both Naples and Sicily the viceroyal power strongly influenced academic developments, but an event comparable to the 1547 closure of the Neapolitan academies took place in Sicily much later, in 1678, with the closure of the academies of Messina.<sup>54</sup>

Sicily was thus characterised by a distinctive, though peripheral, literary culture, represented especially by the academies; it had its roots in the Sicilian School and led to a parallel literary production in Sicilian. The history and cultural heritage of the island crucially affected the reception of coeval mainland developments, including the reception of *Orlando furioso*. Compared with Naples, however, Sicily has drawn far less scholarly attention, and the Sicilian reception of the *Furioso* has not been critically investigated at all. A part of this thesis is therefore dedicated to reconstructing for the first time the reception of Ariosto in Sicily throughout the Cinquecento.

Despite the preference for Tasso's epic and the marginalisation of Ariosto's romance, in both Sicily and Naples, Ariosto's poem featured in a variety of texts and contexts outside the chivalric frame of reference with which it is traditionally associated. It is particularly striking that, while no editions of the *Furioso* were printed locally, two spiritualisations of the romance were published in Southern Italy, Cristoforo Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali* (1593; in Naples) and Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale* (1596; in Messina). These represent half of the religious rewritings of the poem published in Cinquecento Italy, the others being Giulio Cesare Croce's *Rime compassionevoli, pietose, e divote sopra la passione, morte, e resurrezione del nostro Signore Giesù Cristo. Composte [...] ad imitazione del primo canto dell'Ariosto* (published after 1575) and Goro da Colcellalto's *Primo canto del Furioso, traslatato in spirituale* (1589), which is actually the same rewriting as Scanello's. Moreover, the *Furioso* features as a prominent model in two works of very different genres by the Calabrese Marco Filippi (1520-1562 ca), who spent part of his life in Sicily.

Such minor and often unstudied receptions are essential for a deeper understanding of the impact of Ariosto's poem in Southern Italy. This thesis investigates the reception of Ariosto's romance in a variety of texts outside the romance and epic genres within a context traditionally considered hostile to Ariosto's chivalric romance and at a period when the *Furioso* was marginalised in favour of the *Liberata*: these responses are here

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<sup>53</sup> This is the year the Dominican Friar Antonio La Pegna was sent to Sicily as Inquisitor. For an overview of the diffusion and structures of the Roman inquisition and the Spanish one see Andrea Del Col, 'La repressione della Riforma in Italia durante il Cinquecento', *La Réforme en France et en Italie: Contacts, comparaisons et contrastes*, ed. by Philip Benedict and others (Rome: Publications de l'École française de Rome, 2007), pp. 481-498. <<http://books.openedition.org/efr/1765>>. [accessed September 2018].

<sup>54</sup> The similarity between the two events is suggested by Montoliu, 'Accademie siciliane...', p. 308.

brought together to map the narrative informing the reception of the *Furioso* in Southern literary culture. The main interest lies, then, in the micro-history of less-known texts, which are essential to assess the extent of the dissemination of Ariosto's romance. Approaching these texts from the perspective of adaptation and dissemination intended as processes will allow us to bring to light the persistence of Ariosto's poem through its penetration into new literary genres and cultural realms.

The dissemination of *Orlando furioso* has so far been mentioned mostly in terms of diffusion. However, the 'spreading of seeds' at the core of dissemination also implies a generative and therefore creative force connected to such an act of diffusion. Considering the text as an overlaying of meanings, Roland Barthes notes that it 'answers not to an interpretation, even a liberal one, but to an explosion, a dissemination'.<sup>55</sup> As the text is a fabric of citations, references, and allusions, it becomes a space where multiple voices are encountered: the plural of the text is based on 'the stereographic plurality of its weave of signifiers'.<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, discussing the difference between the coexistence of multiple meanings in a text (polysemy) and dissemination, Eddo Evink observes that polysemy is 'the effort to maintain the many meanings of one word within the extensive framework of the hermeneutic circle and the hermeneutic horizon, while dissemination is the force that inevitably breaks through this circle'.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, Charles Martindale notes that the text becomes an event and every reading a new instantiation.<sup>58</sup> Dissemination, then, refers to the irreducible instability of meaning and the generative and dispersive force that derives from it: it has the potential to destabilise texts and contexts as a culturally productive process.

Both dissemination and, especially, adaptation involve reproduction, and significantly impacted upon the reception of the *Furioso*. Besides the strategies of legitimization discussed by Javitch, in fact, adaptation and dissemination are also essential processes in terms of canonisation. As an authoritative list of works considered essential for the shaping of culture, the literary canon has especially didactic purposes: the classics are the works that are read and studied in the classroom. Although he refers to sociological theories concerned with the modern and post-modern period, by considering canon

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<sup>55</sup> Roland Barthes, 'From Work to Text', in *Image music text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (London: Fontana, 1977), p. 159. Originally published: 'De l'œuvre au texte', *Revue d'esthétique*, 3e trimestre 1971.

<sup>56</sup> Barthes, 'From work to text', p. 159. Dissemination is discussed also by Derrida (Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson, 6th edn (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 334. Originally published: *Dissemination* (Paris: Seuil, 1972).

<sup>57</sup> Eddo Evink, 'Polysemy and Dissemination', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 43 (2012), 264-284 (p. 264).

<sup>58</sup> Charles Martindale, *Redeeming the Text: Latin Poetry and the Hermeneutics of Reception* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 16-17.



formation as ‘a historically cumulative process’<sup>59</sup> E. Dean Kolbas has drawn attention to its historical dimension. More importantly, as a result of the didactic role assigned to the classics, reproduction and adaptation are indicated as inherent processes of canon formation.<sup>60</sup> according to Kolbas, ‘because canonical works have historically been the source of imitation and reproduction over protracted periods of time, a necessary feature of any such work will be its historical persistence and broad cultural familiarity’.<sup>61</sup> The scholarship on the reception of the *Furioso* certainly seems to point to its persistence and to a certain extent of cultural familiarity.

Due to its pervasive presence, the concept of adaptation has recently attracted scholarly interest, which has focussed on the transposition of a work from one medium or cultural context to another. In *A Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon proposes to theorise adaptation from a threefold perspective: as a product, a process of creation and a form of intertextuality. As a product, an adaptation is the explicit and sustained transposition of a work. As a process of creation, adaptation is explicitly connected with a recognisable work and, like imitation, entails a process of appropriation: it is a ‘creative and interpretive act of appropriation and salvaging.’<sup>62</sup> Finally, referring to Gerard Genette, Hutcheon mentions the palimpsestuous intertextuality of adaptation. More importantly, Hutcheon underscores the salvaging aspect of adaptation through a biological approach that draws attention to the dynamic relationship between alteration and preservation: stories change and evolve to fit new contexts and environments and thus propagate through adaptation, which is a replication.

On the other hand, Julie Sanders has distinguished adaptation from appropriation while considering both as manifestations of intertextuality. Compared with adaptation, appropriation implies the notion of usurpation and takeover: it is a sustained engagement with the source often adopting a critical approach. Sanders notes that adaptations often offer a revised viewpoint and the reinterpretation of canonical texts in new generic contexts and thus ‘prove complicit in activating and in some cases reactivating the profile and popularity of certain texts, participating in canon formation in some respects’.<sup>63</sup> as adaptation depends upon and simultaneously maintains the existence of a canon, it can be

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<sup>59</sup> E. Dean Kolbas, *Critical Theory and the Literary Canon* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2001), p. 60.

<sup>60</sup> Kolbas, p. 4.

<sup>61</sup> Kolbas, p. 58.

<sup>62</sup> Linda Hutcheon with Siobhan O’ Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2012), p. 8.

<sup>63</sup> Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 29.

conservative as well as oppositional.<sup>64</sup> Sanders's approach stresses the ambivalent nature of adaptation and the critical posture underpinning the act of appropriation.

Although Hutcheon and Sanders are concerned mostly with modern, cross-cultural adaptations, their insights provide a perspective that brings to light new aspects of the reception of *Orlando furioso*, especially in relation to its presence in rewritings distinguished by their distance from the source text in terms of time, place and literary traditions. Dissemination and adaptation, including appropriation, are here treated as strictly connected creative processes involving repetition and alteration, that is, not necessarily also as the product of such processes. This distinction is due to various considerations. Intending adaptation as a process seems particularly apt especially when dealing with the literary developments after Trent. Reviewing the major cultural trends of the later Cinquecento, Virginia Cox has defined this period as one of 'reinvention, reappropriation, redirection, of a dissolution of all paradigms and a gestation of new ones'.<sup>65</sup> Cox draws attention to the emergence of a new religious literature that aimed at appropriating and converting, and thus correcting, profane literature: she refers to a 'poetics of conversion, both in the sense of a spiritual transformation and in the more banal and material sense of adapting a structure originally for one use to another'.<sup>66</sup> Significantly, these observations draw attention to the concept of adaptation, and particularly to the process of adapting previous works and structures to new ends. None of the texts I analyse rewrite *Orlando furioso* as a whole but only some of its episodes, characters and poetic mechanisms within new discourses. Yet Ariosto's rewriters went beyond the simple act of citation and allusion: they actively incorporated Ariosto's text in cross-generic literary works that significantly announced their intertextual relationship with the *Furioso*. These rewritings, then, are the product of the authors' act of appropriation and adaptation of *Orlando furioso* to new literary genres and cultural domains. The act of appropriating a text and adapting it is then also an act of negotiation between the status of the text and new cultural concerns.

This thesis will examine three main works that share some significant features. Firstly, as mentioned above, they make the relation with the *Furioso* explicit in their titles. Secondly, they transpose Ariosto's text from its original genre into new poetic discourses and cultural domains. Thirdly, their critical approach to the *Furioso* has ideological implications or motivations, albeit to varying extents. Finally, they were composed or

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<sup>64</sup> Sanders, pp. 27-28.

<sup>65</sup> Virginia Cox, *The Prodigious Muse: Women's Writing in Counter-Reformation Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), p. 32.

<sup>66</sup> Cox, *Prodigious Muse*, p. 34.

proposed for printing in Southern Italy. The diversity of these texts itself signals the extent of the dissemination of Ariosto's poem: investigating them from the perspective of dissemination, appropriation and adaptation allows us to focus on dynamics of critique and adherence, rejection and permanence, repetition and alteration, and to bring to light the multifarious transformations of Ariosto's romance. My discussion will, then, include also a reconstruction of the contexts and traditions to which *Orlando furioso* is adapted or onto which it is grafted.

Part One explores the adaptation of *Orlando furioso* in Marco Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto* (1584), an elegiac rewriting of parts of Ariosto's romance based on Ovid's *Heroides*, and examines especially the transformation of some of Ariosto's characters and its critical consequences. The analysis of Filippi's adaptation will be introduced by a review of the tradition of the genre adopted by the rewriter, where tradition is broadly intended as 'a way of conceiving the character of an intellectual programme, or a body of texts'.<sup>67</sup> Part Two explores the religious reception and criticism of *Orlando furioso*, particularly after the Council of Trent, and focusses on a religious rewriting of part of the *Furioso*, Cristoforo Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali* (1593). This work re-proposes a previous rewriting but was printed in Naples. After discussing practices of literary censorship, expurgation and religious recasting of literary classics, and especially of *Orlando furioso*, the work of Scanello, a wandering street singer, is examined in relation to this background as well as located in its Neapolitan context. Part Three concentrates on the reception of *Orlando furioso* in Sicily by mapping and exploring its multifarious dissemination across genres and contexts, especially in relation to the island's distinctive cultural history. Never specifically investigated, the Sicilian reception of Ariosto is chronologically reconstructed from the 1530s, thus going back to an earlier period compared with the other Parts, until the end of the Cinquecento. Finally, Part Four is entirely dedicated to the analysis of Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale* (1596), an extensive religious rewriting of the *Furioso* only recently brought to critical attention by Carmen Puglisi. This Part examines the dialectical dynamics underpinning the appropriation of Ariosto's romance, which is both rejected and appropriated.

However, due to inevitable time and space limitations and the particular scope of this thesis, it has not been possible to take into account archival evidence of the circulation of the *Furioso* in Southern Italy, the analysis of Southern epic poems, commentaries and

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<sup>67</sup> Martindale, p. 29.

treatises, and an extensive investigation of Ariosto's romance in the realm of performing arts, including music and theatre. Such further contextualization would be helpful to advance our understanding of the reception of the *Furioso* in Naples and Sicily, particularly from a comparative perspective.

As my discussion progresses, *Orlando furioso* moves further away from its original genre and worldview, penetrating cultural realms seemingly more and more ideologically opposed to Ariosto's romance. Bringing to light the creative and productive deviations engendered by the canonisation of the poem will show that dissemination and adaptation, through negotiating between the poem's established status and alien cultural norms, act at once as conservative and innovative forces. This leads us to question whether works that appropriate and adapt the *Furioso* to alien, if not ostensibly hostile, discourses eventually subvert or reinforce its position within the literary canon. Ultimately, it will be shown that the appropriation of Ariosto in Southern Italy operates to subsume it into new genres, forms and contexts: as adaptation contributed to activate (or reactivate) the profile of *Orlando furioso*, it is through dissemination, transformation and change that Ariosto's romance continued to be a significant presence in literary culture.

# PART TWO. BETWEEN ARIOSTO AND OVID: AN OVIDIAN ADAPTATION OF ARIOSTO'S CHIVALRIC CHARACTERS

## 2. ARIOSTO, OVID, AND HEROICAL EPISTLES. THE LITERARY TRADITION AND RECEPTION OF OVID'S *HEROIDES*.

### 2.1 From Ariosto to Ovid

This Part focusses on the elegiac transposition of *Orlando furioso* in a rewriting based on the classical model of Ovid's *Heroides*<sup>68</sup> and aims to demonstrate the simultaneous transformation and legitimation of Ariosto's romance, which is reestablished as an exemplar through the filter of the Ovidian model. A mysterious and fascinating work, Marco Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto* (1584)<sup>69</sup> consists of ten epistles in *ottava rima* fictionally written by Ariosto's characters, showcasing the dissemination of Ariosto's romance and its adaptation to a different genre and literary tradition, namely the elegiac letters of heroines. When analysed and discussed in terms of the interplay between the elegiac and chivalric models, the *Lettere* allow us to further our understanding both of Ariosto and Ovid.

As an original poetic experiment, the rewriting of the Ovidian model featuring characters from a chivalric romance prompts many questions, including first and foremost the reason for Filippi's choice. The fact that the works of Ariosto and Ovid were both extremely popular provides only a circumstantial explanation that leaves unanswered the question of why Filippi chose in particular to jointly combine two works as different from each other in terms of genre and literary tradition as Ovid's *Heroides* and Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*. The issue of the relation between these two models leads us to question whether Filippi is rewriting Ariosto through Ovid or rather giving an interpretation of the Ovidian model based on Ariosto, especially considering also that the affiliation between Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was a defining feature of the

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<sup>68</sup> For Ovid's text I refer to Ovid, *Le Eroidi*, ed. and trans. by Gabriella Leto (Turin: Einaudi, 1966).

<sup>69</sup> Marco Filippi, *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto, in ottava rima. Di m. Marco Filippi soprannominato il funesto, da lui chiamate epistole heroide, con alcun'altre rime dell'istesso Autore, et di don Ottavio Filippi suo figliuolo. Giontovi alcune rime del signor Giacomo Bosio all'illustre signor Gaspare Fardella baron di San Lorenzo* (Venice: Varisco, 1584). Filippi's work is an octavo book. The letters are preceded by an introductory letter and five sonnets by authors connected with the publication of the work, and are followed by a group of various poems by similar authors as well as by Filippi.

canonization of the romance.<sup>70</sup> The title, the metrical choice of the *ottava rima* and the imitative strategies underpinning Filippi's work provide significant clues to this end. More importantly, the answers to these questions will shed light on Filippi's appropriation and manipulation of Ariosto's chivalric romance and the metamorphosis that its characters and episodes undergo in their adaptation to a new genre. Ultimately, I will demonstrate that Filippi's relationship with the *Furioso* oscillates between repetition and alteration; it will be seen later that a similar dynamic underpins the rewritings of Cristoforo Scanello and Vincenzo Marino (respectively in Part Three and Five, but in far more extreme terms due to their ideological standpoint).

Filippi's work has largely been neglected by academic scholarship. The author himself is mentioned in works cataloguing Calabrese poets or works influenced by Ariosto,<sup>71</sup> and has received particular attention only from Ludovico Perroni Grande, Francesco Mirabella and Pasquino Crupi.<sup>72</sup> Crupi's contribution, a recent edition of Filippi's *Rime spirituali*, is the most recent, as the studies by Perroni Grande and Mirabella date back to the first half of the nineteenth century. Mirabella's studies reconstruct the little biographical data that can be found on Filippi and especially focus on his hagiographic poem *Vita di Santa Caterina*.<sup>73</sup> To date, Perroni Grande has been the only scholar to dedicate a specific study to Filippi's letters and his work as an emulator of Ariosto. However, Perroni Grande's criticism is limited to a bibliographical description of the *Lettere* and an account of the textual parts of the *Furioso* to which each epistle refers, which leads him to notice Filippi's strict adherence to Ariosto's text and to criticise the poet's lack of poetic creativity. Furthermore, while exploring the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle*, Sberlati has contextualised Filippi's letters within the lively debate of the 1580s. The scholar considers the collection of epistles to be opposed to Tasso's style and therefore 'espressione di una polemica le cui tracce più consistenti si rinvencono proprio [...] in

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<sup>70</sup> See the Introduction on Javich, *The canonization of Orlando Furioso*.

<sup>71</sup> Luigi Accattatis, *Le biografie degli uomini illustri delle Calabrie*, 4 vols (Cosenza: Municipale; Redenzione; Migliaccio, 1869-1877), III (1877), p. IX; Giuseppe Jacopo Ferrazzi, *Bibliografia ariostesca* (Bassano: Sante Pozzato, 1881), p. 157; Luigi Aliquò Lenzi and Filippo Aliquò Taverri, *Gli scrittori calabresi: dizionario bio-bibliografico*, 3 vols, 2nd edn (Reggio Calabria: Corriere di Reggio, 1955), I, p. 310; Giuseppe Fatini, *Bibliografia della critica ariostea (1510-1956)* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1958), p. 57; Emilio Barillaro, *Dizionario bibliografico e toponomastico della Calabria*, 3 vols (Cosenza: Pellegrini, 1976), III, p. 32.

<sup>72</sup> Ludovico Perroni Grande, *Un calabrese epigono dell'Ariosto* (Reggio Calabria: Fata Morgana, 1933). First publ. in *Bibliografia calabra*, 4.2 (1933), 149-161. Francesco M. Mirabella, 'Di un poeta cinquecentista sconosciuto: Marco Filippi', *Archivio storico siciliano*, 38 (1913), 54-87. Francesco M. Mirabella, 'Ancora su Marco Filippi', *Archivio storico siciliano*, 45 (1924), 195-205. Marco Filippi, *Rime Spirituali et alcune Stanze della Maddalena a Cristo*, ed. by Pasquino Crupi (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2003).

<sup>73</sup> *Vita di Santa Caterina [...] Et appresso, una operetta di sonetti, e canzoni spirituali, con alcune stanze della Magdalena a Christo [...] (Palermo: Mayda, 1562).*

quella sana dialettica di congetture e confutazioni che le contrapposte fazioni dei settatori continuano a infittire'.<sup>74</sup> Since Sberlati refers mainly to the date of publication, his observations show how the *Lettere* fitted into the debate as a work that the printing industry considered pro-Ariosto. However, as I will argue, Filippi's rewriting ought, rather, to be contextualised within the literary fashion for *trasmutazioni* and *lamenti* of the mid-1550s and in relation to the reception of the *Furioso* as well as that of the *Heroides*.<sup>75</sup>

Discussing the development of the heroic epistle during the Baroque period, Moreno Savoretti mentions Filippi's work as the first attempt at an original reinterpretation of the Ovidian model, pointing out that its novelty lies in the choice of a contemporary work as its main source.<sup>76</sup> Savoretti, who explores the Ovidian epistles as an Italian baroque literary genre, focusses on authors and works from the seventeenth century and consequently mentions Filippi in relation to the developments of the genre rather than investigating Filippi's own literary outlook. In his extensive overview of the heroic epistles, Lorenzo Geri also mentions Filippi from the perspective of the literary evolution of the genre.<sup>77</sup> However, the extent of the originality of Filippi's choice can be fully grasped only by addressing the wider context of the reception of Ovid's heroic letters. The *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto* are not, in fact, the first example of a rewriting of the Ovidian letters but rather draw on a well-established tradition of Ovidian criticism and rewriting.

The following sections of this chapter are consequently dedicated to some preliminary considerations on the diffusion and reception of Ovid's collection of epistles. Though it is impossible to know exactly which edition(s) Filippi had access to, an overview of how Ovid's epistolary work was approached, read and commented on during the Renaissance is required for a better understanding of Filippi's choice, and is essential in order to shed light on his own appropriation and adaptation of the Ovidian model as well as his combination of it with Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*. Following these considerations, this Part will move on to engage more specifically with Filippi's text. I will analyse Filippi's rewriting strategies and discuss the changes Ariosto's characters undergo in his Ovidian setting by exploring in particular the complex relation between Ariosto's chivalric

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<sup>74</sup> Sberlati, p. 150.

<sup>75</sup> The *trasmutazione* is an *ottava rima* poem that incorporates verses from a source-text.

<sup>76</sup> Moreno Savoretti, *Il carteggio di Parnaso. Il modello ovidiano e le epistole eroiche nel Seicento* (Avellino: Sinestesie, 2012), p. 18.

<sup>77</sup> Lorenzo Geri, 'L'epistola eroica in volgare: stratigrafie di un genere seicentesco: da Giovan Battista Marino ad Antonio Bruni', in *Miscellanea seicentesca*, ed. by Roberto Gigliucci (= *Studi (E Testi) Italiani*, 28.2 (2011)), 79-156.

characters and Ovid's abandoned heroines. My analysis will show that on the one hand, the problematic and ambiguous nature of Ariosto's characters is neutralised through their adaptation to the Ovidian archetype of the abandoned heroine, and on the other, that the characters of the *Furioso* are re-proposed as exemplary.

Since my aim is to contextualise Filippi's choice of classical model in his rewriting of the *Furioso*, in outlining the reception of Ovid's *Heroides* I will consider the interpretation of this work by readers, commentators and (re)writers, which resulted in the establishment of a traditional reading of the classical text. This overview will therefore deal with how various authors and works have engaged with the *Heroides* in the Renaissance. Since a broad discussion of the reception of a classical work of long-lasting presence in the Italian literary tradition such as the *Heroides* is beyond the scope of this thesis, I have chosen to address those features that are most significant in the light of Filippi's appropriation of Ovid's work and rewriting of Ariosto's characters.

Renaissance readers and writers approached Ovid's work through an inherited medieval tradition of Latin commentaries on classical texts. This well-established exegetical tradition informed the reading of the *Heroides* by setting them within a moralising frame; this approach continued throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when it was reinforced by vernacular translations in print. However, emphasis on the tradition of moralised reading should not lead to an over-simplification of the presence of the *Heroides* in Renaissance literary culture. Another important feature is the intrinsic dialogic nature of this collection of epistles: characterised by a writer-sender and a reader-receiver, Ovid's epistles provided a unique way to engage with the model as well as a communicative mode particularly adaptable to different circumstances. Furthermore, the letters of abandoned heroines, that is, of fictional female characters expressing their subjective points of view, became a model of poetry voiced and authored by women wishing to articulate their own perspectives. Above all, moreover, by establishing the archetype of the abandoned woman, Ovid's work engendered a connection between the condition of abandonment and female poetical characters. This connection subsequently influenced the way female figures acted and were defined in works belonging to a variety of literary genres, including especially chivalric romance.

This overview, then, specifically addresses the exegetical and interpretive tradition of the *Heroides*, its diffusion and translation in the sixteenth century and its influence in the Italian literary tradition across genres. I will focus both on Ovidian rewritings and the role of the *Heroides* in the fashioning of female authorship and character building, particularly in *Orlando furioso*.



## 2.2 The diffusion of Ovid's *Heroides* and their exegetical tradition

If the influence of the *Metamorphoses* on Renaissance culture can hardly be underestimated, the presence of the *Heroides* is no less pervasive, to the extent that Silvia Longhi has mentioned a 'mimesi delle *Heroides*'<sup>78</sup> especially between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Even though the textual tradition of Ovid's epistles is a particularly complex one, the *Heroides* enjoyed great popularity and diffusion, particularly from the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>79</sup> A collection comprising fifteen letters fictionally written by mythical heroines to the lovers who abandoned them, as well as three paired epistles, Ovid's work was an extremely popular classical work from the later Middle Ages through the Renaissance. In terms of diffusion, a quick search limited to the Latin *Heroides* published in Italy between 1500 and 1560 provides sixty-seven results, which gives an idea of the great number of Ovidian Latin editions equipped with humanist commentaries. More specifically, forty of these sixty-seven editions include the commentary of the fifteenth-century humanist Ubertino Clerico da Crescentino, along with others (such as Antonio Volsco, Domizio Calderino, and Aulo Giano Parrasio, the founder of the Accademia Cosentina),<sup>80</sup> showing Ubertino's commentary long-lasting editorial success.

Built on the same structure as the medieval manuscript commentaries, the humanist printed editions owed much to the medieval exegetical tradition. The medieval commentary inscribed the classical text within the understanding and cultural horizon of the commentator, making Ovid's work a set of mythical stories exemplifying moral issues.<sup>81</sup> The heroines' letters were then read as exemplary cases of chaste and unchaste love, and, because of the didactic aim attributed to Ovid, entered the grammar curriculum of medieval students.<sup>82</sup> As a consequence of the moralising of Ovid's works, his abandoned heroines provided readers with a mythological series of positive as well as

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<sup>78</sup> Silvia Longhi, 'Lettere a Ippolito e Teseo: la voce femminile nell'elegia', in *Veronica Gambarà e la poesia del suo tempo nell'Italia Settentrionale: atti del convegno (Brescia, Correggio, 1985)*, ed. by Cesare Bozzetti, Pietro Gebellini and Ennio Sandal (Florence: Olschki, 1985), pp. 385-398 (p. 390).

<sup>79</sup> On the diffusion of the *Heroides* in the Middle Ages see John Richmond, 'Manuscript traditions and the transmission of Ovid's works', in *Brill's Companion to Ovid*, ed. by Barbara W. Boyd (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 443-483 (pp. 457-462).

<sup>80</sup> Parrasio's commentary is considerably shorter than those of the other scholars on the printed editions, as they refer only to four epistles.

<sup>81</sup> For a discussion on the critical tradition of commentary and its role in interpreting literary works see Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance* (Durham N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993).

<sup>82</sup> Ralph J. Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling: Studies in Medieval School Commentaries on Ovid's 'Ars Amatoria', 'Epistulae ex Ponto', and 'Epistulae Heroidum'* (München: Ardeo-Gesellschaft, 1986).

negative examples: if Penelope was the faithful wife, Phaedra was the lustful one. This moralising approach through a binary lens remained at the core of the interpretation of the Ovidian text, as Ubertino's comment to Penelope's letter clearly shows:

The matter truly is ethical, that is moral, because it describes the conduct of various men and women; the poet's intention...is to demonstrate how love differs in modest and immodest women, showing in some the piety of chaste love and in others the incontinence of lustful fury. Thus, some women are recalled for praise and imitation, and others for the condemnation of lust and immodesty<sup>83</sup>

Through such approach, Ovid's work became a repository of very ductile mythical material concerning relations between male and female lovers.

A significant consequence of this moralised reading was the eventual subversion of Ovid's heroines. In her brief but insightful overview of Renaissance editions and imitations of the *Heroides*, Patricia Phillippy has pointed out that Ovid's work provided a catalogue of women who could easily be adapted to the dominant ideology and thus subverted.<sup>84</sup> The 1586 edition of Ubertino's commentary is preceded by a brief paragraph explaining the etymological meaning of the words Hero and Heroine, concluding that the *Heroides* are 'femine clariores, quales sunt Heroum uxores, et filiae'.<sup>85</sup> The Ovidian heroine is, then, defined by her (blood) relation with the hero: a woman becomes a heroine because of her interaction with a male hero. Such a definition presents the role of women in Ovid's letters as secondary to men and reshapes the female space that the Ovidian heroines try to claim for themselves in opposition with the male-dominated epic dimension. The ideological mechanisms underpinning the reception of Ovid's work shaped also its vernacular translations and rewritings, including Filippi's *Lettere*.

### 2.3 The vernacular translations of the *Heroides* in the sixteenth century

Along with the Latin editions with humanist commentaries, parallel vernacular translations of the *Heroides* were aimed at a different readership and therefore met different criteria and requirements. These vernacular translations ought to be distinguished from the Latin editions because of the different approach implied in the

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<sup>83</sup> Phillippy translates a passage of Ubertino's commentary. Patricia B. Phillippy, '“Loytering in Love”: Ovid's *Heroides*, Hospitality, and Humanist Education in *The Taming of the Shrew*', *Criticism*, 40 (1998), 27-53 (p. 31).

<sup>84</sup> Phillippy, '“Altera Dido”: The Model of Ovid's *Heroides* in the Poems of Gaspara Stampa and Veronica Franco', *Italica*, 69 (1992), 1-18 (pp. 4-5).

<sup>85</sup> *Publii Ovidii Nasonis poetae Sulmonensis, heroides epistolae: cum interpretibus Hubertino Crecentinatis, et Iano Parrhasio. Eiusdem Sappho cum Domitio, et Ibis cum Cristophoro Zaroto. Cum enarrationibus Iodoci Badij Ascensii in haec omnia, Et annotationibus Ioan. Baptistae Egnatij [...]* (Venice: Zaltieri, 1586), a8<sup>v</sup>.

choice of translating a Latin classic into the Italian vernacular. While the Latin editions were directed to an educated elite, the vernacular translations provide evidence of the success and dissemination of Ovid's work in different social, cultural and literary contexts. Nonetheless, albeit directed to different readerships, both the Latin and the vernacular editions shared a moralising approach, assigning a didactic purpose to Ovid's work.

The first vernacular translations of Ovid's *Heroides* date back to the Middle Ages. Among the flourishing of medieval *volgarizzamenti* of Latin classics in the Northern Italian courts in the fourteenth century, Domenico da Montecchiello's verse translation deserves a special mention as the first rewriting in *ottava rima* of Ovid's work<sup>86</sup> and as it was printed at least three times between the late Quattrocento and the Cinquecento (1489, 1508, 1510).<sup>87</sup> The use of the *ottava rima*, the traditional rhyme of popular romances, reveals the oral and declamatory purpose of this *volgarizzamento*. A prose translation by Carlo Figiovanni was published in 1532 but, despite being introduced as authored by a friend of Boccaccio, it most likely was the work of a contemporary translator presenting it as medieval.<sup>88</sup>

The most successful translation of the *Heroides* was the mid-century *volgarizzamento* by Ramigio Nannini. Nannini, also known as Remigio Fiorentino, published his *Epistole d'Ovidio* for the first time in 1555.<sup>89</sup> A Florentine contemporary of Filippi, Nannini translated Ovid's epistles into the vernacular and adopted the *verso sciolto* rather than the *ottava rima*. Despite the author's apparent displeasure with his work,<sup>90</sup> the *Epistole* enjoyed great popularity, given that it was reprinted thirteen times throughout the sixteenth century. After Nannini's translation in *verso sciolto*, in 1587 Camillo Camilli

<sup>86</sup> On Montecchiello see Liana Cellerino, 'Domenico da Montecchiello', in *DBI*, XL (1991), pp. 640-642. On Montecchiello's work see also Egidio Bellorini, *Note sulle traduzioni italiane delle Eroidi d'Ovidio anteriori al Rinascimento* (Turin: Loescher, 1900).

<sup>87</sup> It was printed in Brescia in 1489, in Venice in 1508 and Turin in 1510.

<sup>88</sup> for a general overview of medieval translations of Ovid's works in Europe see Ralph J. Hexter, 'Ovid in translation in medieval Europe', in *Übersetzung: ein internationales Handbuch zur Übersetzungsforschung = Translation: an international encyclopedia of translation studies = Traduction: encyclopédie internationale de la recherche sur la traduction*, ed. by Harald Kittel, Juliane House and Brigitte Schultze, 3 vols (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2004), II, pp. 1311-1328. Regarding the *Heroides*, Hexter particularly outlines the works of Ceffi and Monticchiello and defines Figiovanni's as 'pseudo-medieval' (p. 1323).

<sup>89</sup> Nannini's translation, published by Giolito, has been recently edited: Remigio Nannini, *Epistole d'Ovidio*, ed. by Domenico Chiodo, (Turin: RES, 1992). Chiodo edited the edition of 1560, also published by Giolito, which has a slightly more extensive critical apparatus (including the author's remarks at the end of each letter).

<sup>90</sup> '[G]uidato più presto da inchinazion naturale che da mia propria professione, io tradussi nella nostra lingua toscana le Pistole d'Ovidio (se già elle non sono più tradite che tradotte)' writes Nannini in his introduction letter to his friend Piefrancesco di Tomaso Ginori. His discontent about his work is such that he says he should not be blamed for it 'perchè né anco una donna debb'esser biasiamata se ella fa un mostro, o vero i figli brutti, perché la colpa è della sua sorte, non della sua voglia' (Nannini, pp. 5-6).

translated his *Epistole d'Ovidio* in *terza rima*, which afterwards became the standard metrical verse of baroque heroic epistles. As both Figiovanni and Camilli's translations were printed only once in the Cinquecento, Nannini's *volgarizzamento* was by far the most successful. The success of Nannini's *Epistole* indicates that its translation met the tastes of Cinquecento readers and thus provides significant clues as to the critical and ideological framework underpinning the interpretation and dissemination of Ovid that was dominant at the time.<sup>91</sup>

As pointed out by André Lefèvre, translating means rewriting an original text and adapting it to the dominant poetics, so that ideology and poetics are fundamental factors in fashioning the strategy of the translator.<sup>92</sup> Consistent with the traditional understanding of the *Heroides*, Nannini's aim seems to have been mostly didactic in nature. Though Nannini explicitly mentions only an 'inchinazion naturale'<sup>93</sup> as the reason for his translation in the introductory letter to his friend Pierfrancesco di Tommaso Ginori, his didactic intent is clear from the critical framework directing the reading of Ovid's letters. His edition of Ovid's work, in fact, is equipped with a simple critical apparatus which includes an introduction to each letter summarising the mythological events to which the epistle refers to as well as providing its interpretation in terms of exemplarity. In the edition of 1560, moreover, at the end of each letter a few lines recall the ending of the story and occasionally reprise the moral and ethical considerations expressed in the introduction. So, for instance, in the introduction to Penelope's letter Nannini states that Ovid 'dimostra l'onestà d'una pudica donna, e quanto ella sia in loro [in women] degna di lode';<sup>94</sup> he reprises this observation in his final comments, where he reports the ending of Penelope's story and writes that she 'visse insino all'ultima vecchiezza continente e pudica'<sup>95</sup> and is therefore presented by poets as an example of honesty. Not only does recalling each myth and its ending provide information on the single epistle, but it also provides a critical frame to guide the reader: the collection of letters is offered to the reader as a handbook of mythological tales as well as a series of exemplary stories. Furthermore, the presence of a summary for each myth made the work accessible also to

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<sup>91</sup> Nannini's translation enjoyed enormous success until the eighteenth century, as pointed out by Valeria Traversi: Pietro Michiele, *Il Dispaccio di Venere: epistole eroiche*, ed. by Valeria Traversi (Bari: Palomar, 2008), p. 90. On the success of Nannini's work see also Gabriele Bucchi, 'Meraviglioso diletto'. *La traduzione poetica del Cinquecento e le 'Metamorfosi d'Ovidio' di Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara* (Pisa: ETS, 2011), pp. 295-305, where Bucchi compares Nannini's translation with Anguillara's *Metamorfosi* in terms of popularity.

<sup>92</sup> André Lefèvre, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>93</sup> Nannini, p. 5.

<sup>94</sup> Nannini, p. 7.

<sup>95</sup> Nannini, p. 15.

readers who did not read Latin and might have had a limited knowledge of classical mythology. The readership of vernacular translations also included a greater number of women. The didactic significance of Ovid's stories was consequently emphasised as they were offered to women as an educational handbook.<sup>96</sup> Nannini's critical apparatus was likely also an important factor accounting for the popularity of his work.

As is consistent with an understanding of Ovid as an instructive author, Nannini is concerned with deriving a lesson in the dynamics of love and female nature. When introducing Briseis' letter to Achilles,<sup>97</sup> for instance, the Florentine writer comments that her epistle shows that, in hard times, a woman should always refer to and trust her true and loyal lover ('quello che per molte volte s'è conosciuto vero e fedele amante').<sup>98</sup> This is clearly an instruction for women as well as men highlighting the importance of trust and fidelity between lovers. The episode of Canace, who fell in love with her brother Macareus and was therefore forced by her father to commit suicide, shows how powerful the feeling of shame can be in women and makes her exemplary for her 'animo generoso e risoluto'.<sup>99</sup> rather than condemned for her incestuous love, Canace is praised for her resolution in committing suicide. Nannini thus uses the myth of Canace to expose female nature. As the Florentine rewriter focusses on pointing out how each myth exposes the mechanisms of love and affection, particularly in women, Ovid's work provides the opportunity for the study of a phenomenology of love and the nature of women.

It is noteworthy that the only loves characterised as dishonest are those of Sappho and Phaedra. The epistle of the Greek poetess, which is the last of the collection, is epitomised as evidence that 'tutte le donne sono naturalmente volubili',<sup>100</sup> as it displays her lack of resolution. As 'disonesto amore',<sup>101</sup> Sappho's unrequited love draws attention to the fact that her suicide is an exemplification of the fate endured by dishonest love. Phaedra's love is similarly condemned. Theseus' wife writes to her chaste step-son in secret with the intention of seducing him. Both Phaedra and Sappho write to men who have openly rejected them in order to beguile them. They, then, do not write as abandoned or betrayed women but as women attempting to seduce men. Seduction can be accepted only as a male prerogative. Therefore, Phaedra is accused of 'sfacciata libidine' and 'soverchia lascivia', her love considered as dishonest as Sappho's, and both their stories are presented as cautionary tales about the consequences of dishonest love.

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<sup>96</sup> Phillippy, '“loytering in love”...', p. 32.

<sup>97</sup> Nannini uses the name Ippodameia instead of the patronimic Briseis.

<sup>98</sup> Nannini, p. 25.

<sup>99</sup> Nannini, p.125.

<sup>100</sup> Nannini, p. 255.

<sup>101</sup> Nannini, p. 270.

Nannini's interpretive moralisation of Ovid's work could even result in the reinterpretation of the myth in a manner antithetical to Ovid, as in the case of Dido's letter. According to Nannini, the tragic decision of the queen of Carthage demonstrates that a voluntary death is better than a life in shame: her options were either to live in shame or to die with honour, and she chose to commit suicide not out of love for Aeneas but out of love for her first husband Sychaeus, in contrast with Ovid and Virgil's versions. This alternative version of Dido's myth was well established during the Middle Ages: while Dante includes the queen of Carthage among the lustful, Boccaccio, well aware of both traditions, in his late work *De mulieribus claris* gives his preference to the one more favourable to Dido.<sup>102</sup> Nannini's choice of this version over Ovid's reveals his intention to save the heroine's reputation by accepting as historically more accurate the ancient myth according to which a chronological gap separates Dido and Aeneas and she dies in order not to have to remarry. Regardless of the fidelity to the original text, in order to derive a general moral lesson Nannini endorses a tradition antithetical to Ovid's and consequently unmasks his work, based on Virgil's story, as rhetorical and fictional, making explicit his representation of the heroine within a different discourse.

As highlighted by Phillippy, Ovid's catalogue of exemplary heroines was associated with the tradition of illustrious women and thus

offered a model which may be considered both accessible and attractive to female readers and writers, but one whose power to overturn or revise traditional gender paradigms was clearly diminished given the reconsignment of Ovid's subversive heroines to their tamer, and ideologically tamed, roles as exempla of feminine behaviour.<sup>103</sup>

Nannini's endorsement of Boccaccio's version is a case in point; moreover, it also shows that such revision and subversion could result in the open contradiction of Ovid and the eventual salvaging of the heroine.

## 2.4 The *Heroides* in the Italian literary tradition

So far I have focussed on the moralised reading and adaptation of Ovid's work in the Cinquecento. However, it would be reductive to consider the *Heroides* only as mythological paradigms of vice and virtue. Other aspects are also important in relation to

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<sup>102</sup> Dante, *Inf.* V 25-72; Boccaccio, *De mulieribus claris*, XLII. On Dido's myth and its two traditions see Paola Bono and M. Vittoria Tessoro, *Il mito di Didone: avventure di una regina tra secoli e culture* (Milan: Mondadori, 1998). Of particular interest are Bono and Tessoro's observations on the early Christian interpretation of Dido as pagan martyr (pp. 59-77) and on the political significance attributed to the myth between 1500 and 1600 (pp. 197-244).

<sup>103</sup> Phillippy, '“Altera Dido”', pp. 4-5.

their continuous significant presence in the Italian literary tradition, including *Orlando furioso*. The ongoing popularity of Ovid's work influenced Renaissance Latin and vernacular poetry in many respects: as a model of elegiac poetry, as a collection of letters - particularly female-authored fictional letters - and as an intertextual work at its very core.

Firstly, the *Heroides* were one of the main classical models for elegiac poetry and naturally influenced and contributed to define the genre to which they belonged. Many authors who composed elegies following the Roman Augustan model found in Ovid's works a main source of inspiration. Secondly, and more importantly, the *Heroides* are epistolary elegies: as Donatella Coppini has pointed out, the heroines' letters are characterised in particular by a dialogical connection between writers and readers, and provided particular opportunities for experimentations that account for the Quattrocento popularity of Ovid's work.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, many fifteenth-century authors experimented with this popular subcategory of elegy, the most representative cases being the *Historia de duobus amantibus* by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1444) and the *Liber Isottaes* by Basinio da Parma (1450 ca), both in prose and partially modelled on Ovid; while the latter was printed only once in 1539, the former became a best seller, being reprinted several times in the Cinquecento and translated into vernacular as well as other languages.<sup>105</sup>

Moreover, the dialogical nature of a collection of (mostly) unanswered letters made the *Heroides* particularly open to literary responses: to Ovid's letters were often attached three replies (Ulysses' letter to Penelope, Demophoon's to Phyllis and Paris's to Oenone). These letters (*Aulii Sabini responsiones*) were believed to have been written by the Roman poet Sabinus, mentioned by Ovid himself as the author of six responses to his heroines' letters (*Amores* 2.18.27-34). However, the authorship of Sabinus has been questioned and the letters are nowadays considered to be the work of the fifteenth-century humanist Angelo Sabino.<sup>106</sup> The humanist poet compared himself directly with the Roman master while simultaneously having his characters compare themselves fictionally with Ovid's.

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<sup>104</sup> Donatella Coppini, 'Basinio da Parma e l'elegia epistolare', in *Il rinnovamento umanistico della poesia: l'epigramma e l'elegia*, ed. by Roberto Cardini e Donatella Coppini (Florence: Polistampa, 2009), pp. 281-302 (p. 286, 296).

<sup>105</sup> Basinio's *Liber Isottaes* was printed only once in 1539. On Basinio da Parma and epistolary elegy in general see Cardini and Coppini; on Piccolomini see Gabriella Albanese, '“Civitas Veneris”: percorsi dell'elegia umanistica intorno a Piccolomini', in *La poesia umanistica in distici elegiaci. Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Assisi, May 15-17 1998* (Assisi: Accademia Propeziana del Subasio, 1999), pp. 125-164. A thorough account of the *Historia*'s early-printed editions is found in Morral: Eric John Morral, 'Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pius II), *Historia de Duobus Amantibus*: The Early Editions and the English Translation Printed by John Day', *Library*, 6, 18.3 (1996), 216-229.

<sup>106</sup> About Angelo Sabino, see Guido Canali, 'Sabino, Angelo', in *DBI*, III (1961), pp. 234-235.

The *Heroides*, then, provided a platform for poetic experimentation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, up to and including Filippi's rewriting of Ariosto. Before Filippi's *Lettere*, however, there had been only two organic rewritings of Ovid's epistles. Luca Pulci's *Pistole* were published in Florence in 1482; comprising seventeen letters in *terza rima*, they are introduced by an epistle fictionally written by Lucrezia Donati to Lorenzo de' Medici. Except for Lucrezia and Lorenzo, however, the protagonists of the letters are characters from myth and history.<sup>107</sup> It is noteworthy that, while six epistles are male-authored, Pulci did not reprise Ovid's double letters.

The other rewriting is the *Heroidum epistol[arum] libri quattro, christianis dogmat[ibus] refertissimi* by Aurelio Albuzio (1542), largely neglected by scholarly criticism.<sup>108</sup> Albuzio's unique work is a collection of epistles written in Latin, in elegiac couplets, and dedicated to the cardinal Ercole Gonzaga, son of Isabella d'Este and a prominent diplomat at the courts of France and Spain. More importantly, Cardinal Gonzaga was the author of a Latin catechism and a promoter of the reforms sought by the Council of Trent, which accounts for the choice of the cardinal as a dedicatee of a collection of epistles of moral and religious matters. Albuzio's work, introduced by praise from the well-established humanist Andrea Alciato,<sup>109</sup> integrates Ovid's model within a framework entirely alien to the classical work. That the main model is Ovid is clear from the title (*Heroidum epistularum libri*) and from the metrical choices; notably, moreover, the Ovidian model of the double letters is prominent (out of sixteen epistles, five are paired). At the same time, Albuzio's strong religious concerns are stressed not only in the title but also by attaching a book on Christian morals (*moralium Christian[orum] liber uno*) at the end of his collection of epistles.

Albuzio's work transposes the concept of *Heroides* into the religious and contemporary domain. The definition of a female heroine as connected to a male hero conventionally attributed to Ovid develops into the definition of a heroine defined as such by her connection to God and Christian values. Thus, the letters are fictionally written by prominent noblewomen and noblemen from Northern Italy who distinguished themselves

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<sup>107</sup> On Pulci's letters within their humanistic context see Stefano Carrai, *Le muse dei Pulci: studi su Luca e Luigi Pulci* (Naples: Guida, 1985) and Francesca Battera, 'Le Pistole di Luca Pulci e la formazione culturale del giovane Lorenzo', in *Lorenzo the Magnificent: Culture and Politics*, ed. by Michael Mallett and Nicholas Mann, Warburg Institute Colloquia, III (London: the Warburg Institute, 1996), pp. 177-190. On Pulci's use of Ovid, including the *Metamorphoses*, see Donatella Bisconti, 'Ovide dans les Pistole de Luca Pulci: l'allégorie au service de la moralisation de la littérature érotique', in *La mémoire du texte: intertextualités italiennes*, ed. by Marina Marietti and Claude Perrus (= *Arzanà*, 6 (2000)) pp. 139-170.

<sup>108</sup> Aurelio Albuzio, [...] *Heroidum epistol. libri quatuor. Christianis dogmat. refertissimi. Moraliū Christian. liber unus*. (Milan: I. A. Burgensis, 1542).

<sup>109</sup> Alciato was Albuzio's tutor. See Roberto Abbondanza, 'Alciato, Andrea', in *DBI*, II (1960), pp. 69-77.



for piety and religious deeds, including Vittoria Colonna and Giulia Gonzaga, Ercole's sister, both of whom were widows renowned for their loyalty to their deceased husbands. While adapting a pagan model characterised by an inherently secular erotic nature to a Christian moralising framework, Albuzio's rewriting is underpinned by the ideological features distinguishing the reception of Ovid's *Heroides*, to the point that the secular heroine of the pagan myth is replaced by the new Christian woman.

As expressions of the female perspective voiced by a male poet, the *Heroides* provided a model for male ventriloquised poetry. The courtly environment of the late Quattrocento in particular was characterized by the flourishing of imitations of Ovid's work featuring contemporary characters, such as the Ferrarese Niccolò da Correggio's *Como* [sic] *Penelope scrisse al suo Ulisse*, which presents his wife as author, and Giovanni Cosentino's four vernacular epistles, which are fictionally written by the duchess of Calabria Ippolita Sforza to her husband.<sup>110</sup> The opening letter of Pulci's collection also falls within this category, as we have seen.

Moreover, the fictional female authorship distinguishing the *Heroides* allowed for the appropriation of the Ovidian model by women writers. Ovid's *Heroides* provided women with characters and situations, especially of abandonment, through which they could refashion themselves poetically. As pointed out by Carlo Vecce and Virginia Cox, the *Heroides* became fundamental for the development of women's writing.<sup>111</sup> By mainly referring to the faithful wives Penelope and Laodamia, for instance, Vittoria Colonna appropriated the Ovidian model for 'deft self-mythologizing'<sup>112</sup> as well as a platform for voicing her subjective perspective. Besides providing a literary space for women's self-expression that was grounded on a well-established tradition, Ovid's letters could also be used to reshape the male-centred Petrarchan canon, as discussed by Phillippy with regard to the works of poets Gaspara Stampa and Veronica Franco.<sup>113</sup> Thus, the imitations and rewritings of the *Heroides* discussed so far clearly prove not only that Ovid's epistolary collection was particularly suitable for refashioning and transforming traditional poetics,

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<sup>110</sup> On Correggio's epistolary elegies see Longhi, 'Lettere a Ippolito e Teseo'; on Cosentino's biography and works see Mauro de Nichilo, 'Cosentino, Giovanni', in *DBI*, XXX (1984), pp. 12-14. See also Virginia Cox, *Women's Writing in Italy 1400-1650* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008) pp. 49-50.

<sup>111</sup> Vecce specifically analyses a capitolo by Colonna in Carlo Vecce, 'Vittoria Colonna: il codice epistolare della poesia femminile', *Critica Letteraria*, 21 (1993), 3-34; Cox, *Women's writing in Italy*...pp. 49-50.

<sup>112</sup> Virginia Cox, *Lyric Poetry by Women of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), p. 81. On the mediation of Boccaccio see Vecce, p. 25.

<sup>113</sup> Phillippy points out how, in the poems of both Franco and Stampa, the appropriation of the Ovidian model results in the revision of Petrarchan poetics. Phillippy, '“altera dido”'.

but also that the appropriation of the Ovidian model implied an act of revision especially on ideological grounds.

The subjective and dialogic nature of the epistolary form as well as the shaping of the archetype of the abandoned woman were significant factors underpinning the establishment of Ovid's work as a poetic model in the literary tradition. In her analysis of the Spanish *novela sentimental*, Marina Brownlee has drawn attention to how Ovid's work establishes a new discourse that is inherently novelistic in Bakhtinian terms, pointing out that 'the *Heroides*' ability to generate subjective, psychological, skeptical – novelistic – discourse is the hallmark of its discursive innovation.'<sup>114</sup> This made the *Heroides* a particularly influential model informing a variety of compositions, particularly with regard to the development of female characters.

Endorsing Brownlee's analysis of Ovid's novelistic discourse, Suzanne Hagedorn has noted the importance of Ovid's *Heroides* in creating the model of the abandoned woman as well as shaping female perspectives in the works of Dante, Boccaccio and Chaucer. Following in the footsteps of Lawrence Lipking's contribution, which focusses specifically on the archetype of the abandoned woman in poetic tradition, she has drawn attention to the potential revisionism implied in making use of the Ovidian model.<sup>115</sup> Thus, the *Heroides* featured as a subtext in very different kinds of poetic productions and significantly influenced the shaping and characterisation of female characters across genres. The section that follows focusses specifically on the relation between Ovid's work and *Orlando furioso*, particularly with regard to the *Furioso*'s female characters.

## 2.5 *Orlando furioso* and the *Heroides*

As female characters are central to the intricate plot of *Orlando furioso*, which is set into motion by the action of a woman, Ariosto's romance offers a gallery of heroines as well as heroes, both of whom play essential roles for the development of the poem's storylines. Given the encomiastic theme underpinning Ariosto's poem, the woman-warrior Bradamante, destined to found the Este dynasty, is an extremely prominent female character. Beside central characters like Angelica, Bradamante and Marfisa, moreover, a series of minor ones intervene to slow or delay the progress of the male heroes and

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<sup>114</sup> Marina Scordilis Brownlee, *The Severed Word: Ovid's 'Heroides' and the Novela Sentimental* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 36.

<sup>115</sup> Lawrence Lipking, *Abandoned Women and Poetic Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). Suzanne C. Hagedorn, *Abandoned Women: Rewriting the Classics in Dante, Boccaccio, & Chaucer* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2003), p. 8.

therefore the advancement of the plot. As Ita Mac Carthy has demonstrated in her exploration of the role of women in the *Furioso*, the geste episodes, in which the male hero delays his quest most often in order to save a damsel in distress, are especially concerned with female sexuality and social order.<sup>116</sup> With its intertwined episodes and the significant role played by women, *Orlando furioso* includes episodes of abandonment drawn on the Ovidian model. Two elegiac monologues in particular are modeled on the Ovidian epistles: the laments of Olimpia and Bradamante, both significantly rewritten in Filippi's collection.

The episode of Olimpia of Holland, added in the 1532 edition of *Orlando furioso*, is based on the myth of Ariadne and Theseus. As a damsel in distress, Olimpia is rescued twice by Orlando in canto X and XI. The King of Frisa Cimosco conquers Olimpia's kingdom in order to force her to marry his son Arbante, whom she rejects due to her love for Bireno. Forced to marry Arbante, Olimpia murders him and flees, unaware that Cimosco has captured Bireno. The king then threatens to kill her lover if he cannot capture Olimpia, whose predicament ends when Orlando rescues and reunites her and Bireno. Afterwards, Olimpia is abandoned by Bireno on a desert island and is rescued again by Orlando while about to be sacrificed to a sea monster. As the heroine is forsaken by her unfaithful lover on an island, Olimpia's abandonment is clearly modeled on the episode of Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus on the island of Naxos. Thus, by echoing Ariadne's letter to Theseus (*Her. X*), Ariosto depicts the heroine lamenting her miserable condition in a dramatic monologue after she finds herself left behind and alone on a menacing-looking island (*Of X*, 16-34).

Due to the strong intertextual relation between Olimpia's lament and Ariadne's epistle, the lament of Ariosto's heroine has attracted scholarly interest focusing on the appropriation of the classical source. In her analysis of the poetic techniques of both Ovid and Ariosto in representing the abandoned heroine, Nancy Ciccone has demonstrated that, particularly through their expression of physical self-awareness, both Olimpia and Ariadne subtly unmask themselves as fictional, which in Olimpia's case results in reversing the medieval allegorical tradition.<sup>117</sup> Rather than the tradition of moralised reception, then, it was Ovid's poetics that influenced Ariosto. As Javitch has stressed with regard to the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid's playfulness informs Ariosto's so that his 'dramatically shifting, contradictory characters render attempts at allegory particularly

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<sup>116</sup> Ita Mac Carthy, *Women and the Making of Poetry in Ariosto's 'Orlando Furioso'* (Leicester: Troubador, 2007), pp. 95-116.

<sup>117</sup> Nancy Ciccone, 'Ovid's and Ariosto's Abandoned Women', *Pacific Coast Philology*, 32, (1997), 3-16.

futile'.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, the significance of the abandonment for the connotation of the character of Olimpia has been remarked by Marzia Minutelli, who has reconstructed the web of Ovidian references underpinning Olimpia's lament. Minutelli argues that, since Ariosto's character displays the same narcissistic eros as her classical archetypal models, she is equally ambiguous, and concludes that Olimpia syncretically epitomises all mythical abandoned heroines, citing her identification with the archetype as the feature inspiring Filippi's rewriting.<sup>119</sup>

The second elegiac monologue especially evocative of the *Heroides* is the lament of Bradamante in canto XXXII. The first part of the lament takes place while the heroine is anxiously awaiting Ruggiero (*Of* XXXII, 18-25) and the second part after she learns from a Saracen knight of the rumors regarding Ruggiero's love for Marfisa (*Of* XXXII, 37-46). After experiencing a whirlwind of emotions, Bradamante, who is a woman-warrior, eventually decides to take up arms and challenge Marfisa. As Ariosto's commentators have pointed out, among other models Ariosto alludes to the *Heroides*.<sup>120</sup> More importantly, Francesco Ferretti has recently highlighted the presence of numerous elegiac laments throughout the *Furioso* and that the subtext of the *Heroides*, interwoven with other elegiac sources, is at the base of the elegiac building of Bradamante as abandoned heroine, particularly in canto XXXII. Focusing on the case of Bradamante and her laments throughout the romance, Ferretti has demonstrated that the elegiac discourse counterbalances the epic one in defining Ariosto's heroine both as warrior and abandoned heroine.<sup>121</sup> Thus, in *Orlando furioso* the *Heroides* features as a prominent subtext for the connotation and development of female figures.

The importance of the elegiac mode in the *Furioso* was reflected in the flourishing of elegiac rewritings in the mid-sixteenth century, which Nunzio Ruggiero has rightfully associated with Filippi's project, pointing out that in Southern Italy it was particularly Laura Terracina who composed elegiac *lamenti* based on the *Furioso*.<sup>122</sup> As seen in the Introduction, Terracina played a prominent role in promoting Ariosto's poem through her *Discorsi* (1549, 1567). Her first book of *Rime* (1548), however, already featured

<sup>118</sup> Daniel Javitch, 'Rescuing Ovid from the Allegorisers', *Comparative Literature*, 30 (1978), 97-107 (p.102).

<sup>119</sup> Marzia Minutelli, 'Il Lamento dell'eroina abbandonata nell'*Orlando furioso* (X, XX-XXXIV)', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 9.3 (1991), 401-464 (pp. 451-452).

<sup>120</sup> See Bigi's comments to XXXII 10-46.

<sup>121</sup> 'Bradamante elegiaca. Costruzione del personaggio e intersezione di generi nell'*Orlando Furioso*', *Italianistica*, 37.3 (2008), 63-75; 'La follia dei gelosi. Lettura del canto XXXII dell'*Orlando furioso*, *Lettere italiane*, 62 (2010), 20-62.

<sup>122</sup> Nunzio Ruggiero, 'Sul riuso del genere cavalleresco in età barocca: a proposito delle *Epistole Eroidiche* di Antonio Bruni', *Annali dell'Università Suor Orsola Benincasa*, 17.2 (2009), pp. 783-798 (784-785).

*trasmutazioni* of stanze from the *Furioso*, including two compositions later incorporated in her first *Discorso*.<sup>123</sup> Significantly, most of these poems are reworkings of elegiac parts, such as the lament of Orlando in canto VIII (stanza 76), Bradamante in canto XLIV (stanza 62) and XXXIII (stanza 18), and four of them, the laments of Sacripante, Rodomonte, Isabella and Bradamante, are explicitly entitled *lamento*. The *Furioso* also features as poetic source in Terracina's subsequent collections of *Rime*: in the *Rime seconde* (1549) Terracina reworks one of Ariosto's stanzas, a *trasmutazione* of *Of* XXIII, 68 entitled *Atto d'Isabella verso Zerbino*, and in the *Quarte Rime* (1550) she rewrites two stanzas (*Of* XLV, 52; VIII, 73).<sup>124</sup>

More importantly, in the *Seste Rime* (1560), besides a few *trasmutazioni* (*Of* XXVII 118; XXIV 83,84; XXV 36, 37) there is a series of laments in the voice of Ariosto's characters, namely the laments of Isabella, Zerbino, a second lament of Isabella, Rodomonte, Orlando, Bradamante and Angelica. These laments, which are not *trasmutazioni*, are striking for two main reasons. Firstly, they are grouped together at the end of the collection as thematically and poetically consistent. Secondly, and more importantly, there appears to be a dialogic connection between the laments of Isabella and Zerbino. In Isabella's first lament, the heroine laments the absence of her beloved, reassures him of her affection and cries against the fate which has separated them. In the following *lamento*, Zerbino begins by directly addressing Isabella and reassuring her that he left her unwillingly ('t'ho lasciata cor mio contra mia voglia').<sup>125</sup> Thus Zerbino's lament functions as a response to Isabella's. The heroine's second lament follows Zerbino's: Isabella's situation is more clearly fashioned on the Ovidian abandoned woman, as she is stranded on a menacing-looking shore and accuses her lover of forgetting and abandoning her. While her second lament stresses the distance between the two lovers and the heroine's condition of abandonment, the fact that the laments of these two characters are presented in a linear sequence results in their representation as a response to one another; that is, dialogical. With regard to the dialogic aspect of Isabella and Zerbino's laments, it is noteworthy that canto XXIV features a dialogue between Isabella and the dying Zerbino (*Of* XXIV, 77-84).

The influence of the archetype of the abandoned woman on this kind of reworking of the *Furioso* is evident also in another *trasmutazione* by a Neapolitan noblewoman,

<sup>123</sup> *Rime* (Venice: Giolito, 1548). I refer to the *trasmutazioni* of *Of* XXXI, 1 and *Of* XXX, 1 (B5<sup>r</sup>-B6<sup>v</sup>; D5<sup>v</sup>-D6<sup>v</sup>), which share the same dedicatee, the Bishop of Arriano, in both works, and feature in the *Discorso* in the same order so that canto XXX of the *Discorso* is based on *Of* XXXI, 1 and canto XXXI on *Of* XXX, 1.

<sup>124</sup> *Rime seconde* [...] (Florence: Torrentino, 1549); *Quarte rime* [...] (Venice: Valvassori, 1550).

<sup>125</sup> Laura Terracina, *Seste rime* (Lucca: Busdrago, 1558), N5<sup>r</sup>.

Eleonora Sanseverino: in her reworking of *Of* XLIV, 61, the choice of the epistolary form reveals the Ovidian influence, as pointed out by Virginia Cox.<sup>126</sup> Curiously, moreover, to Simone Fornari, one of the first commentators of *Orlando furioso*, was attributed an *Epistola sulle furie di Orlando amante*, published in Florence in 1593 but never found.<sup>127</sup>

Filippi's project of rewriting elegiac parts of *Orlando furioso* was, then, part of a well-established literary fashion. As both Ferretti and Geri have pointed out, Filippi isolates elegiac moments from his source and rewrites them following the epistolary model of Ovid's *Heroides*.<sup>128</sup> However, there are some significant differences between the reworkings of Ariosto's laments by Terracina and Sanseverino and Filippi's *Lettere*. Scattered throughout her lyrical production, Terracina's *lamenti* and *trasmutazioni* appear as homages to Ariosto's poem and a literary *divertissement* integrated in the tradition of courtly Petrarchism. On the other hand, as a collection of elegiac poems that is consistent in terms of sources (Ariosto and Ovid), Filippi's project is originally characterised by a structural unity as a collection of Ovidian epistles dedicated to *Orlando furioso* as the main source. Moreover, since the derivation from the *Furioso* is explicitly announced together with the epistolary form in the title, Filippi's *Lettere* are presented as an organic epistolary rewriting of Ariosto's romance. This is even more evident from the fact that, as pointed out by Heinrich Adicke Doerrie,<sup>129</sup> it is the author himself who chooses to emphasise the title *epistole heroide* in explicit reference to Ovid's *Heroides*: *Lettere sopra il Furioso [...] da lui chiamate epistole heroide*. Filippi, then, rewrites Ariosto through Ovidian lenses; that is, he adapts characters and episodes from the *Furioso* to Ovid's elegiac discourse. Since the *Heroides* offered a platform particularly apt for re-envisioning the tradition with ideological as well as poetic consequences, Filippi's rewriting of Ariosto goes beyond literary homage and *divertissement*. My analysis of the *Lettere* will therefore explore how and to what extent, while constantly recalling the *Furioso*, Filippi in fact alters its characters and episodes, particularly in relation to the contemporary reception of the romance.

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<sup>126</sup> Sanseverino's *trasmutazione* was published in the *Stanze transmutate del Ariosto con una canzone bellissima pastorale...* ([Venice]: Furlano, 1545). Virginia Cox reports and analyses the poem in *Lyric Poetry by Women of the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 158-162.

<sup>127</sup> Rosario Contarino, 'Fornari, Simone', in *DBI*, XLIX (1997), pp. 80-82.

<sup>128</sup> Ferretti, 'La follia dei gelosi' pp. 39-40. Geri draws his conclusion from Ferretti's observations (Geri, pp. 88-89).

<sup>129</sup> Heinrich Adicke Doerrie, *Der heroische Brief. Bestandsaufnahme, Geschichte, Kritik einer humanistisch-barocken Literaturgattung* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1968) p. 145. Doerrie's work is the most recent and comprehensive survey of heroic epistles in Baroque Europe.

### 3. THE *LETTERE SOPRA IL FURIOSO DELL'ARIOSTO* BY MARCO FILIPPI (1584)

#### 3.1 Marco Filippi's project

The *Lettere sopra il Furioso* by Marco Filippi are a collection of ten epistles in *ottava rima*, seven of which are written from a heroine to a hero while three are from a hero to his beloved. None of the epistles is combined with an answer from the addressee, as Filippi did not adopt the Ovidian double-letter scheme. The letters are: from Bradamante to Ruggiero, from Ginevra to Ariodante, from Olimpia to Bireno, from Alcina to Ruggiero, from Isabella to Zerbino, from Fiordispina to Ricciardetto, from Rinaldo to Angelica, from Sacripante to Angelica, from Fiordiligi to Brandimarte and, finally, from Rodomonte to Doralice.<sup>130</sup> That one third of the letters are male-authored may be surprising but it is noteworthy that this was also the case in Pulci's collection, which included six epistles fictionally written by men out of eighteen poems.<sup>131</sup> In Filippi's work, moreover, every letter is preceded by a brief subtitle with the purpose of specifying which characters and events from the *Furioso* are referenced. This seems to be the only formal aspect shared by all the ten letters, since they differ not only in content but also in length and modality of imitation. Filippi's work displays a deep and complex intertextual relationship with Ariosto's poem, as indicated not least by the metrical choice of the *ottava rima*; and the modalities through which the relation with the *Furioso* operates are diverse.

The analysis of Filippi's epistles is rendered more difficult by the fact that they were published posthumously after revision and editing by others. From the introductory letter written by Ottavio Filippi, Marco's son, we know that Filippi senior composed his epistolary collection in his youth and dedicated it to Gaspare Fardella, Baron of San Lorenzo, who later wished to have it printed. Ottavio, who dedicated the *Lettere* to Fardella, writes that he had them revised and amended by Giacomo Bosio, member of the Gerosolimitano Order of the Knights of Malta, before agreeing to their publication. As the epistles were 'cose solamente abbozzate in gioventù',<sup>132</sup> according to Ottavio, they underwent a significant revision, not least due to the desire to protect Filippi senior's

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<sup>130</sup> From here onwards I will refer to Filippi's epistles by indicating the characters' initial letters (BR, GA, OB, AR, IZ, FR, RA, SA, FB, RD – see the list of abbreviations) followed by the number of the stanza(s) I refer to. When quoting Filippi's introductory prose lines I simply refer to the epistle.

<sup>131</sup> see Carrai, pp. 25-33.

<sup>132</sup> *Lettere*, \*5<sup>r</sup>. The letter to Fardella (\*2<sup>r</sup>- \*6<sup>r</sup>) is dated 1 November 1579 from Rome. On Giacomo Bosio see Gaspare de Caro, 'Bosio, Giacomo', in *DBI*, XIII, pp. 261-264.

reputation. Taking into account Filippi senior's mention in the introduction to his *Vita di Santa Caterina* (1562)<sup>133</sup> that he lived in Calabria for 22 years and Ottavio's remark about his father's youth when he first composed the *Lettere*, the concept and first draft of the epistles can be dated to between the 1540s and 1550s, a period when reworking Ariosto's stanzas was a particularly popular practice, as previously seen.

However, Marco Filippi's project also seems to have been ongoing in later years and in a different period of his life. His intention to complete the *Lettere* is attested in the letter introducing his *Rime Spirituali*, included in the *Santa Caterina* and also dedicated to Fardella: Filippi mentions as upcoming projects 'l'epistole heroide in ottava rima, sopra il Furioso', the dialogue of 'Androgeno Padrone e Ocrame cavallo, et appresso la vita di David, con un raccoglimento e discorso del Testamento vecchio e nuovo [...] quali opre sono parte poste indiseño, parte lineate e parte poste in isghizzo'.<sup>134</sup> The hagiographic poem *Vita di Santa Caterina* and the attached *Rime spirtuali et alcune stanze della Magdalena a Cristo* were composed during the author's captivity in the Castellammare prison in Palermo, where Filippi was imprisoned in 1561 for reasons that are still unclear. It appears that he confessed to having heretical opinions, repented and that he was punished, but not sentenced to death.<sup>135</sup> Details of Marco Filippi's life are scant, especially with regard to the period when he resided in the Kingdom of Naples. After spending his childhood and part of his youth in Calabria, he moved to Sicily, and specifically to Palermo, where he was associated with prominent local academies, and particularly the Accademia dei Solitari. This second, Sicilian phase of Filippi's life will be discussed more specifically in Part Four, which is dedicated to the reception of the *Furioso* in Sicily. The mention of the *Lettere* in a poem published in Palermo as well as its dedication to a member of a prominent Sicilian family, the Fardella, shows that Filippi intended to carry on his project also in the Sicilian environment. Significantly, moreover, his academic name 'Funesto' appears in the title of all his works. The composition of the *Lettere sopra il Furioso* was then an ongoing project spanning from the 1540s, the years of Filippi's youth in Calabria, to the 1580s, when his letters were extensively revised and eventually published.

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<sup>133</sup> 'questo mio rozzo intelletto, a pena avezzo ne le civile pratiche di Scigliano, e della Bagnara, dove per venti duo anni mi ho bagnato di maniera che mi bisognerà molto sole per asciugarmi' Introductory letter to Fardella, *Vita di Santa Caterina*, \*2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>134</sup> *Vita di Santa Caterina*, X2<sup>v</sup>. The letter is dated 10 December 1562.

<sup>135</sup> See Rosario Contarino, 'Filippi, Marco', in *DBI*, XLVII (1997), pp. 700-701. On Filippi's sentence see Carlo Alberto Garufi, 'Contributo alla storia dell'Inquisizione di Sicilia nei secoli XVI e XVII', *Archivio storico siciliano*, 38 (1913), 264-329 (pp. 305-306).



Since the *Lettere sopra il Furioso* announce their derivation from *Orlando furioso*, they partially fall within Hutcheon's definition of adaptation as 'an extended, deliberate, announced revisitation of a particular work of art'.<sup>136</sup> At the same time, choosing a different genre creates a shift in the reader's expectations. The choice of representing the perspective of female characters from one source presupposes a double binary narrative, a parallel untold story, which distinguishes Filippi's work from the contemporary literary production drawing on Ariosto's romance. Filippi rewrites and transforms Ariosto's characters by adding or elaborating on their elegiac aspects through the specific filter of Ovid's abandoned women, who were abandoned because of an inevitable war (Penelope, Laodamia), left for another woman (Oenone, Hypsipile, Deianira, Medea), condemned by fate (Dido, Canace), or simply forgotten and left behind (Ariadne, Phyllis, Briseis). Consequently, Filippi chooses female characters whose stories are characterised by similar episodes: Bradamante waiting for Ruggiero, Ginevra and Fiordiligi left by their husbands fighting a war abroad, Alcina abandoned by Ruggiero, Isabella and Fiordispina separated from their lovers by fate, Rinaldo and Sacripante chasing after the elusive Angelica, Rodomonte abandoned by Doralice, who chose Mandricardo over him. The subtitles, whose brevity may be considered as a further evidence of the popularity of Ariosto's stories and characters, clarify where the fictional writing of each letter takes place, and are therefore of helpful guidance to the reader in integrating it within the narrative fabric of *Orlando furioso*. For example, the indication that Bradamante writes 'a Ruggiero, quando ella intese dal cavalier guascone l'amicitia, e domestichezza tra lui, e Marfisa'<sup>137</sup> signals that the epistle is to be located in the episode of Bradamante's waiting for Ruggiero in canto XXXII of the *Furioso*.

Filippi's choices of heroines and episodes reveal the complexity of his appropriation of Ariosto's model. Filippi appears to approach and adapt Ariosto between two extreme modalities: writing something new which gives a new voice to the character on the one hand, and rewriting textual sections, often already of elegiac mode, from the source-text on the other. More importantly, Filippi often plays with the blurred line that separates these extremes, especially by interpolating Ariosto and Ovid. Thus, while some letters are rewritings closely echoing Ariosto's text, others are more free-standing and often more Ovidian. Therefore, an intertextual playfulness with both models informs Filippi's appropriation of the *Furioso* to a different extent and with different outcomes.

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<sup>136</sup> Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation*, p.170.

<sup>137</sup> Filippi, *Lettere*, A1<sup>r</sup>.

As mentioned in 2.5, two of Filippi's letters are based on the laments of Bradamante and Olimpia, which makes these epistles particularly interesting as Ovid was already a source for Ariosto's text. Filippi's choice to imitate Ariosto imitating Ovid, in fact, reduces the literary space for an original reinterpretation of the episodes. In two cases, Filippi has constructed his epistles on references to specific textual segments of the romance: the letters of Isabella and Rodomonte echo Isabella's story as she narrates it in canto XIII and Rodomonte's misogynistic lament in canto XXVII respectively. While these epistles rewrite and adapt textual segments of *Orlando furioso* in which Ariosto's characters express themselves directly, in other cases, while displaying references to the source text, Filippi re-proposes Ariosto's characters in elegiac situations by giving them a new voice. In the case of Ginevra, a silent character is given a voice. Alcina writes after she is left by Ruggiero. Fiordiligi, like Ginevra, writes while her husband is away at war. Rinaldo and Sacripante write to the fugitive Angelica. Fiordispina writes to Ricciardetto during her captivity. These letters are characterised by a more free-standing approach to Ariosto's material, often through a strong Ovidian influence and a complex interplay between the two authors.

Throughout the letters Filippi adapts the *Furioso*'s material in different ways, through textual citations and allusions, contaminations of episodes, and by elaborating on themes associated with Ariosto's episodes. His adaptation of Ariosto's characters thus results in an altered interpretation of said characters. In the following sections of this chapter the discussion of issues such as the dramatisation of Ariosto's characters, the neutralisation of their subversive potential, the normalisation of their relationships, the (re)establishment of their exemplarity, and the expression of the female perspective compared with the male one, will show that, revisited through Ovidian lenses, Ariosto's heroines and heroes are the objects of a moralised interpretation entailing the resolution of the ambiguities and complexities of the source material.

### **3.2 Reiterating the heroine's tragic predicament**

Following in the footsteps of the Ovidian heroines, Ariosto's characters write to their beloved at their most dramatic moment, which results in enhancing their tragic predicament and suffering. The first epistle of Filippi's collection is Bradamante's letter to Ruggiero, which, as previously mentioned, refers to the moment when she is waiting for her lover after learning the rumours about Ruggiero and Marfisa's love from a Saracen knight. Filippi rewrites the heroine's lament in *Of* XXXII, 10-43, which depicts the

heroine experiencing a wide range of emotions, from impatience to jealousy, from despair to a wish for vengeance. While Bradamante's lament starts before she meets the Saracen knight and resumes after it, she fictionally writes her letter after hearing about Marfisa. Her epistle therefore overlaps with the lament's dramatic peak, as Bradamante is convinced of having been abandoned by Ruggiero.

In another epistle, Olimpia, like Ovid's Ariadne, writes to her lover right after discovering that she has been abandoned and, as with Bradamante's lament, her monologue in the *Furioso* provides the main source for her letter to Bireno. In canto X, Ariosto describes the abandonment of the heroine, her realization of what has happened and her subsequent reaction. Alone on a threatening-looking island, Ariosto's Olimpia, like Ovid's Ariadne, calls her lover's name, sees his ship from afar, despairs, accuses him of cruelty, expresses her fears of wild beasts and pirates, laments the impossibility of returning to her homeland, and recalls the loss of her family because of her love for him (*Of X*, 18-34). As through Ariosto Filippi refers to Ovid, Olimpia's letter displays a complex interplay between Ariosto and Ovid, who overlap and integrate with one another.

More importantly, besides integrating the two models, Filippi also reworks his sources by elaborating on those parts that are not explicit in either in order to underscore the heroine's tragic predicament. Like Ovid's Ariadne and Ariosto's Olimpia, Filippi's Olimpia realises the absence of her lover when she tries to touch him in bed but does not find him. However, while in Ovid and Ariosto the heroine awakes after her attempt to reach out to her lover, in Filippi she is awakened by a nightmare about her past misadventures, which prompts her to try to hold Bireno to reassure herself and therefore to realise his absence. In both Ovid and Ariosto the heroine reaches out to the hero in a state of semi-awareness: Filippi elaborates on the reason behind the awakening and adds the particular element of the heroine's dream. Olimpia dreams of being in Frisia again, where Cimosco wishes to slay her but decides to increase her suffering by killing Bireno instead. Significantly, Olimpia wakes up only when she sees Bireno die in her dream, which adds more pathos to the discovery of his absence and evokes the conventional correlation between death and sleep.

The dramatic condition of the heroine is further highlighted by Filippi's reiteration of another thematic element, the heroine's suicide. Filippi elaborates on Olimpia's suicide attempts, describing the many ways she tries to commit suicide and the inconstant thinking that drives her. While in Ariosto only one attempt is mentioned, Olimpia writes of her indecisiveness as to which method to adopt: she considers throwing herself into the sea, letting herself die of heartache, hitting herself with a rock and hanging herself

(OB 15-19). In this case, Filippi's source is also Phyllis' letter to Demophoon, which ends with the heroine describing her design to commit suicide and the methods she considers (*Her.* II, 133-145). Filippi's approach to the sources allows him to add a personal twist to the character of Olimpia, in comparison with both Ariosto and Ovid, by trying to fill in the voids left by both authors. The poet's elaborations on Olimpia's ominous dream and death-wish results in further emphasising her tragic condition: Olimpia fashions herself as a victim and as an abandoned lover who can only hope that death will release her from her suffering.

While in the *Furioso* Olimpia's story ends with her marriage to king Oberto of Ireland, and therefore with a happy ending, in other cases the amplification of the heroines' tragic predicament anticipates and evokes their tragic fate in Ariosto's romance. This is particularly evident in the case of Isabella, who tricks Rodomonte into killing her after the death of her beloved Zerbino. Ariosto's heroine addresses her lover Zerbino while she is kept prisoner in a cave by a group of thieves who plan on selling her. As the letter is fictionally written by a captive Isabella before the arrival of Orlando, who saves and eventually reunites her with Zerbino, she writes to inform her lover of her situation and to ask him to come to her rescue. Since Isabella recounts her story, in this case Filippi does not rewrite an elegiac monologue but rather readapts a narrative section to fit into the epistolary frame. More specifically, Filippi refers to Isabella's first appearance in *Orlando furioso*, when she is found by Orlando and tells him of her misadventures (*Of* XIII, 3-31).

After falling in love with the Christian paladin Zerbino, the Saracen princess Isabella flees her kingdom escorted by his knights Odorico and Corebbo, who are tasked with bringing her to her future husband; stranded in an unknown land after a storm at sea, she is assaulted by Odorico, whose attempt at rape is interrupted by the arrival of a group of thieves. Filippi's Isabella writes her story after six months of captivity at their hand. Filippi echoes Ariosto from the very beginning, and particularly evokes the image of the cave as tomb. In the first stanza, Isabella compares her captivity in a deep cave to being buried: 'in sì profondo speco, che non molto | piu giù s'affligon l'anime dannate' (IZ, 1). The comparison between the cave and hell derives from Ariosto: '[Orlando] scende la tomba molti gradi al basso, | dove la viva gente sta sepolta' (*Of* XII, 90, 1-2). Significantly, this image is reprised at the end of the letter, where Isabella asks Zerbino to love her like Ceres loved her daughter (IZ 26). Bringing the letter full-circle to its conclusion, the reference to the myth of Proserpina, the daughter of Ceres abducted by

the god of the underworld, stresses Isabella's infernal condition and casts a gloomy shadow over her character, foreshadowing her tragic fate.

Isabella's death is also prefigured in a more explicit manner, as Filippi reprises the element of her virginity to highlight her virtue as well as to foretell her fate. If in the *Furioso* Isabella mentions her jeopardised virginity towards the end of her story, in her epistle she does so in stanza 6 ('non m'han però de l'honor mio privata | che tal sperano vendermi a un mercante, | che portarmi al soldan debba in Levante'),<sup>138</sup> before reassuring Zerbino that she will belong only to him: 'ma donisi il mio corpo, o pur si venda [...] che prezzo non sarà che vi si spenda, | che 'l saldo cor non scacci e non rifiuti' (IZ 7). Thus, the letter-writing Isabella adopts the image of trade, connected to her virginity, to emphasise the strength of her incorruptible love. Her virginity is mentioned again later in the epistle, where it foreshadows her tragic destiny:

Hor temo, ohimè, che questa gente ria  
mi venda a gente più crudel e fiera;  
che mi tolga per forza questa mia  
virginitade a te serbata intiera.  
Benché, s'altri che tu di lei mi priva,  
io rimarrò per poco spatio viva.

IZ, 16

In writing that losing her virginity at the hands of another man but Zerbino will lead to the loss of her life, Isabella explicitly foretells her death at the hands of Rodomonte, who falls in love with her after Zerbino's death. In canto XXIX of the *Furioso*, in order not to lose her virginity and betray Zerbino's memory, Isabella tricks Rodomonte into killing her; her virtue is then recognised by God and forever associated with her name. As death is the main underlying subtext of Isabella's epistle, the drama of her condition prefigures her tragic destiny.

Filippi amplifies the tragic nature of the heroines' predicament by evoking, integrating and elaborating on textual and thematic features that characterise Ariosto and Ovid. The dramatisation of the heroine's condition, which is a general trend throughout the heroines' letters, engenders an alteration of Ariosto's characters, whose victimhood is brought to the fore in contrast with the strength of their love. This can result in significant changes to the *Furioso*'s characters, as is the case of woman-warrior Bradamante and villainous sorceress Alcina. The letters of Bradamante and Alcina especially showcase the

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<sup>138</sup> Filippi distinctly echoes Ariosto: 'm'han promessa e venduta a un mercadante, | che portare al soldan mi de' in Levante' (*Of XIII*, 31, 7-8).

moralising and normalising trends that underpin Filippi's adaptation, and the consequent reduction of the complexity of Ariosto's characters.

### 3.3 From jealous woman-warrior to woman in love: Bradamante

As previously mentioned, Bradamante's epistle is structured on her lament in the *Furioso* after she learns the rumours regarding the love between Ruggiero and Marfisa. Indeed, Filippi's adherence to Ariosto is built on a fabric of intertextual references to the extent that some verses are simply rewritten, in some cases replicating the rhyme scheme almost to the letter:<sup>139</sup>

Odo ch'è comparita una donzella  
al vostro campo, nomata Marfisa,  
a gli occhi tuoi *assai leggiadra e bella*,  
perch'io me ne tormenti in questa guisa;  
e che raro, o non mai, né tu da quella  
né quella anco da te può star divisa;  
tal ch'io me'l credo, e chi l'intende crede,  
che sia tra voi di matrimonio fede.

BR, 3

Ma come poi soggiunse, una donzella  
esser nel campo, nomata Marfisa,  
che men *non era che gagliarda, bella*,  
*né meno esperta d'arme in ogni guisa*;  
che lei Ruggiero amava e Ruggiero ella,  
ch'egli da lei, ch'ella da lui divisa  
si vedea raro, e ch'ivi ognuno crede  
che s'abbiano tra lor data la fede;

*Of XXXII, 30*

In *Orlando furioso*, Bradamante reproaches Ruggiero as cruel; she blames Love, hope, her irrational desire ('desire irrazionale' *Of XXXII, 21, 2*) and lack of rationality, Melissa and Merlino's prophecy for her heartache. After hearing of Ruggiero's supposed betrayal, she accuses him of dishonesty, mentions her desire for vengeance and, finally, concludes that it is impossible for her to stop loving him and attempts suicide. While most of these elements are present also in Filippi's epistle, they are developed in a different fashion, and some are significantly omitted, which results in underscoring the heroine's victimhood as abandoned woman and censoring her agency as woman-warrior.

The epistle begins and ends with the heroine expressing how her suffering is leading her to death. As the abandoned heroine aims to persuade her lover to return to her, the letter-writing Bradamante stresses the pathetic aspects of her condition as well as the cruelty and ingratitude of Ruggiero: the irrational love and jealousy, which are the core thematic elements of the heroine's lament in the *Furioso*, are removed or neutralised in her epistle. Although Ariosto's Bradamante longs for death as liberation from her pain, she is driven both by desperation and rage, and ultimately a desire for vengeance over the rival Marfisa, who is also a female warrior. Filippi's Bradamante, however, does not write

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<sup>139</sup> See Perroni Grande, pp. 6-7.

as a woman-warrior experiencing feelings of rage and jealousy but simply as a woman in love.

Filippi's Bradamante is driven only by despair and does not show any feelings of rage towards either Marfisa or Ruggiero. The letter, written by a heroine overwhelmed by grief and about to attempt suicide, ends with no mention of her eventual decision to join the Christian army and challenge the rival woman-warrior:

Già più direi, ma mentre in questo foglio  
cerco por del mio duol più segno espresso;  
e mentre in parte fuor trabocco, e scioglio  
il gran martir, che 'l cor mi tiene oppresso;  
l'interno et inaccettabil mio cordoglio,  
ch'esser non vuole in vane carte impresso,  
m'affligge in guisa, che di tormi accenna  
dal cor lo spirto, e da la man la penna.

BR, 23

Significantly, moreover, the rival woman warrior is described only as 'leggiadra, e bella': no mention is made of her prowess, whereas in the *Furioso* Marfisa is defined as 'gagliarda, bella, né meno esperta d'arme in ogni guisa', as emphasised in BR 3 and *Of* XXXII, 30. While Ariosto's abandoned heroine in her jealousy considers Marfisa guilty of taking her lover from her and therefore wishes to slay her, the letter-writing Bradamante sympathises with the rival to the point of warning her against Ruggiero's volubility in the previous stanzas:

Misera me, che pur più d'una volta  
da gli inganni d'Alcina ti ritrassi.  
Misera, e quante volte in fumo ho volta  
d'Atlante ogni malia ne i cavi sassi,  
sperando sempre (oh sfortunata e stolta)  
ch'un travagliar sì lungo mi giovassi.  
Ma veggio, ahimè, con infallibil prova,  
che sol altrui la mia fatica giova.

Ma chi pensato avria che tanto amore  
agghiacciar si potesse in questa guisa?  
Non dar Marfisa a questo ingrato il core,  
com'io, ch'al primo assalto fui conquisa.  
Non creder che sia dentro qual di fuore,  
se non vuoi nel suo amor esser derisa;  
perché le finte sue parole tante,  
ch'ora ti dice, a me le disse innante.

BR, 20-21

The exclusion of the heroine's feeling of rage can be viewed also as a consequence of the adaptation to the Ovidian epistolary frame from a rhetorical perspective: the letter-writer fashions herself, emphasising her condition of misery and omitting her rage and jealousy, because she aims to persuade her unfaithful lover to come back. From this perspective, it is significant that Bradamante's identity as a warrior is mentioned only in relation to her rescue of Ruggiero from Alcina's enchantment and Atlante's palace (in canto IV and VII of the *Furioso* respectively) and is followed by her warning for Marfisa. Thus, rather than highlighting Bradamante's valour, the mentions of her deeds aim to further emphasise the magnitude of Ruggiero's ingratitude and cruelty. As Ferretti has observed, in Bradamante's lament Ariosto eventually combines the opposing elegiac and epic functions of the character, as the heroine's grief and jealousy allow for her quest to be elegiac and epic at the same time.<sup>140</sup> In rewriting Bradamante as an Ovidian abandoned heroine, Filippi removes her fierce jealousy and marginalises her warrior persona. The elimination of Marfisa's warrior persona as well is a consequence of the same premise.

Bradamante and Marfisa are not the only characters who change significantly, as Ruggiero is also represented in a different light. In Ariosto and Ovid the accusation of cruelty and unfaithfulness is already a *topos* in the heroines' laments; unsurprisingly, then, Ruggiero appears in Bradamante's letter as the cruel knight who abandoned his devoted lover. However, Filippi does not only evoke Bradamante's lament but amplifies and elaborates on it by contaminating two of Ariosto's episodes. Through the voice of the abandoned heroine, Filippi presents Ruggiero's birth and upbringing as evidence of his cruelty. The hero's birth and the consequent death of his mother, along with his childhood in Atlante's castle, are mentioned by Bradamante as indications of his 'impietà fiera' which she mistakenly ignored:

Anzi l'error fu mio, e me ne scuso,  
poi ch'avuta di te notizia vera,  
creder dovea che fuori d'ogni human uso  
innata fusse in te l'impità fiera.  
Tu nato in riva al mar, quanto più insuso  
manda l'onda implacabile e severa,  
da lui tal qualità fiera prendesti,  
che la madre nascendo empio uccidesti.

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<sup>140</sup> Ferretti, 'La follia dei gelosi', pp. 42-43.



D'un falso vecchio al monte di Carena  
 allevo fusti a l'alto giogo alpestre,  
 che ti diede a poppar d'una leena  
 il latte crudo, orribile, e silvestre.  
 Dove poi giunto al decimo anno a pena  
 hor in valle frondosa, hor in campestre  
 ti fé a vivi cinghiai trar spesso i denti,  
 e domar gli orsi, e *strangolar serpenti*.

BR, 14-15

Di medolle già d'orsi e di leoni  
 ti porsi io dunque li primi alimenti;  
 t'ho per caverne et orridi burroni  
 fanciullo avezzo a *strangolar serpenti*,  
 pantere e tigri disarmar d'ungioni,  
 et a *vivi cingial trar spesso i denti*,  
 acciò che, dopo tanta disciplina,  
 tu sii l'Adone o l'Atide d'Alcina?

Of VII, 57

The story of Ruggiero's birth is revealed by Atlante in canto XXXVI (59-66), after Bradamante's lament in canto XXXII. As emphasised, Bradamante's remarks on Ruggiero's early life partly echo the words Melissa spoke to the pagan knight in order to convince him to leave Alcina's kingdom in canto VII. While the good enchantress Melissa reminds Ruggiero of his upbringing to urge him to accept his destiny and abandon his effeminate lifestyle under Alcina's influence, in Bradamante's perspective the same upbringing is viewed as negative. Grafted onto the elegiac tone of the letter, Ruggiero's heroic deeds and upbringing do not exalt his valour but rather show his cruelty and insensitivity as a lover.

Both Bradamante and Ruggiero are here represented merely as lovers. Following the Ovidian model, the heroic, male-dominated world is intrinsically considered detrimental to the abandoned heroine, which results in the radical alteration of Ariosto's Amazon warrior. From this perspective, Filippi recuperates and exploits some elements characterising Ariosto's elegiac Bradamante, such as the dynastic prophecy as a further reason for grieving, while also removing and marginalising others, such as irrationality, rage and jealousy. The lack of the theme of jealousy is especially surprising because jealousy is one of the values that allegorisers and commentators attached to Bradamante: according to Toscanella, Bradamante is 'un ritratto di moglie affezionata [...] et anco della gelosia'.<sup>141</sup> Her jealousy is also the main theme of a poem, the *Bradamante gelosa* (1552) by the Pugliese Secondo Tarentino.<sup>142</sup> As it fuels Bradamante's rage, jealousy is connected to her agency as a warrior, so that when in Filippi's epistle the romance character is deprived of such agency, she consequently undergoes a radical simplification. While echoing Ariosto's text and contaminating episodes from the *Furioso*, Filippi simultaneously manipulates and alters them: Bradamante's letter is both a rewriting of

<sup>141</sup> Orazio Toscanella, *Bellezze del Furioso* [...] (Venice: de' Franceschi, 1574), A1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>142</sup> Secondo Tarentino, *Bradamante Gelosa* (Venice: Valvassori, 1552).

the *Furioso* and a re-elaboration of its episodes and characters giving a different light to Ariosto's heroine. Bradamante is represented as a simple woman hopelessly in love rather than a fierce female warrior, while Ruggiero becomes an inevitably cruel lover and Marfisa another future abandoned heroine.

### 3.4 From powerful sorceress to abandoned woman: Alcina

While Ariosto's Amazonian heroine changes significantly in Filippi's rewriting, the character that arguably undergoes the most radical transformation is Alcina. The transformation of powerful sorceress Alcina into an abandoned woman in love is similar to that of Bradamante, in that both are represented as victims and powerless women in love. In the case of Alcina, this is particularly striking given her magical powers and villainous role in Ariosto's poem and the fact that her episode involves deceit and cross-dressing, whose problematic potential is neutralised by Filippi's adaptation.

Alcina writes her letter after Ruggiero's escape to Logistilla's Kingdom. Filippi takes his cue from Ariosto, who describes the sorceress' reaction and despair in two stanzas:

Ecco Ruggier de la dogliosa Alcina  
le disperate, et ultime parole;  
che mentre a cruda morte si destina,  
sparge, come morendo il cigno suole.  
Ella ben c'habbia per virtù divina  
che non debba morir, pur morir vuole;  
perché meglio è per lei, che più non viva,  
se di te dee restar vivendo priva.

AR, 1

Fuggesi Alcina, e sua misera gente  
arsa e presa riman, rotta e sommersa.  
D'aver Ruggier perduto ella si sente  
via più doler che d'altra cosa aversa:  
notte e dì per lui geme amaramente,  
e lacrime per lui dagli occhi versa;  
e per dar fine a tanto aspro martire,  
spesso si duol di non poter morire.

Morir non puote alcuna fata mai,  
fin che 'l sol gira, o il ciel non muta stilo.  
Se ciò non fosse, era il dolore assai  
per muover Cloto ad inasparle il filo;  
o, qual Didon, finia col ferro i guai;  
o la regina splendida del Nilo  
avria imitata con mortifer sonno:  
ma le fate morir sempre non ponno.

*Of X, 55-56*

The opening of her letter is thematically very close to Ariosto's text, recalling Alcina's desire to die and her incapability of acting on it, thus introducing the sorceress as a helpless woman in despair. Furthermore, the first stanza of the epistle establishes the association between Ariosto's character and Ovid's Dido, who is also referenced in Ariosto's text. While stating that her love makes a life without Ruggiero impossible,

Alcina compares herself to a swan and thus evokes Dido's letter to Aeneas, since the Ovidian heroine, too, begins her epistle by comparing her words to a swan song:

Accipe, Dardanide, moriturae carmen Elissae;  
quae legis, a nobis ultima verba legis.  
Sic ubi fata vocant, udis abiectus in herbis  
ad vada Maeandri concinit albus olor.

*Her.* VII, 1-3

The analogy between Dido and Alcina, which runs throughout the entire letter, is based on the *Furioso*, where the main model for the episode of Ruggiero and Alcina is the story of Aeneas and Dido in *Aeneid* IV. Ruggiero, victim of Alcina's spell, is visited by the good enchantress Melissa, who reprimands him and urges him to leave the evil sorceress's influence: significantly, her intervention starts with an echo of Mercury's words when he urged Aeneas to leave Dido.<sup>143</sup> Thus, while the fate of Bradamante and Ruggiero has already been established, Alcina is compared to Dido as she distracts the hero from fulfilling his destiny.

The similarity between the two episodes was known to the commentators of the romance: Ruscelli noted the connection between Aeneas at Dido's court at Mercury's fateful arrival and Ruggiero in Alcina's kingdom at Melissa's crucial intervention.<sup>144</sup> Thus, Alcina reminds Ruggiero that she offered him herself, her kingdom and her people, points out the difficulty for him to find a land to rule and another woman who will love him as much as she does, just as Dido does in her letter to Aeneas (*Her.* VII 13-18, 23-24). Like Dido, moreover, Alcina mentions a possible pregnancy, as also highlighted by Moreno Savoretti:<sup>145</sup>

Forse crudel mentre vivendo insieme,  
sul letto sparso di rose, e viole  
nel corpo mio il tuo pregiato seme  
lasciò il principio di futura prole.  
Hor che destina andar a l'hore estreme,  
perché tanto è 'l dolor, che morir vuole,  
sarai cagion crudel col tuo fuggire  
il proprio sangue in esso far morire.

AR, 7

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<sup>143</sup> See also Bigi's note 51 in *Orlando furioso*, p. 254.

<sup>144</sup> Valgrisi 1556, cc3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> Savoretti, p. 103.

Forsitan et gravidam Dido, scelerate, relinquo,  
parsque tui lateat corpore clausa meo.  
Accedet fati matris miserabilis infans  
et nondum nati funeris auctor eris,

*Her.* VII 133-136

Alcina writes like Dido, the abandoned and suicidal queen of Carthage, rather than as an immortal sorceress. Thus, she reminds Ruggiero of their time as lovers by depicting a *locus amoenus* she is unable to enjoy without him (AR, 12-13), and uses past memories to remind Ruggiero of the ‘dilettoso stato’ (AR 10) of her kingdom as opposed to the hero’s destiny. Her tempting him to abandon the ‘faticoso Marte’ (AR, 10) also reiterates her identification with Dido.

It is also from the traditional perspective of abandonment that Alcina represents herself in aesthetic terms:

Il tuo fuggir ingrato hoggi m’ha tolto  
me da me stessa, ed ogni mio diletto.  
Quel *biondo crin*, che già ti piacque avvolto  
senza intrecciarlo hor è *vile, e negletto*.  
La *neve*, e ’l minio del leggiadro volto,  
e ’l *latte*, ohimé, *del delicato petto*  
teco ne porti; e tutto il resto, ond’era  
chara a me stessa, e di me stessa altiera.

Deh torna ingrato a riveder quegli *occhi*,  
che sempre ti sembrar *duo chiari soli*.  
Deh torna, e torna in me ne i dolci fiocchi  
*di neve i color suoi*, c’hora n’invola.  
A che tardi crudel, e non trabocchi  
quel dolce fuoco in me come far suoli?  
Perché crudel sì ratto hora si sprezza  
questa già cara a te dolce bellezza?

AR, 14-15

Filippi clearly echoes Ariosto, as is emphasised: ‘bionda chioma lunga et annodata’ (*Of*, VII, 11), ‘di terso avorio era la fronte lieta’ (*Of*, VII, 11), ‘son duo negri occhi, anzi duo chiaro soli’ (*Of*, VII, 12), ‘bianca nieve è il bel collo, e ’l petto latte’ (*Of*, VII, 14). However, while referring to Ariosto, Filippi reverses his description of her exceptional beauty. Describing her situation after Ruggiero abandons her, Alcina overturns Ariosto’s representation of her beauty and implicitly recognises that it depends on the presence of Ruggiero. The beauty of the enchantress cannot exist without a beholder, and her magic

is pointless without a victim for her seduction. The fact that the ultimate purpose of her deceptive beauty is his seduction is reiterated in the following stanza, which inverts Ariosto's narrative:

Deh torna ingrato, e di tua man mi veste  
come solevi, hor questa veste, hor quella;  
poiché dicevi, che 'l variar di veste  
mi facea a gli occhi tuoi parer più bella.  
Et hor misera me fra tante meste  
mi vesto sol del duol, che mi flagella;  
poiché l'unico autor del mio ornamento  
lunghi per tanto spatio hoggi mi sento.

AR, 16

In *Orlando furioso*, the joyful life at Alcina's court, where 'e due e tre volte il dì mutano veste, | fatte or ad una, ora ad un'altra usanza' (*Of* VII, 31, 3-4) corrupts Ruggiero, whom Melissa found dressed in an effeminate fashion, like Aeneas at Dido's court. Filippi reverses the relation and depicts Alcina as the one changing attires to please her lover, underlining once again how the exterior is created as a response to the lover's gaze. Alcina portrays herself as a passive victim of her feelings for Ruggiero as well as a passive lover whose actions were aimed only at pleasing him, entirely reversing the dynamics of Ariosto's episode.

The evil enchantress Alcina is the character who undoubtedly undergoes the most radical change. In *Orlando furioso* her villainous role, modeled on the sorceress Circe, ends with the *contrappasso* of the unmasking both of her true nature, that of an ugly old woman, and of her feelings, that is, her love for her victim Ruggiero; her villainy is, however, reiterated in the *cinque canti*, where she allies with the traitor Gano of Maganza. On the other hand, Filippi's Alcina, far from being a powerful sorceress capable of bending men's will through her superhuman seductive abilities, writes to her former victim as a simple abandoned heroine in pain. Despite their love story being based on an illusion, her feelings for Ruggiero equate her with the archetype of the abandoned woman and therefore with the other letter-writing heroines. Alcina's letter is the letter of an abandoned woman in love who has lost a part of her self, as the reversal of roles with Ruggiero's indicates, and she has only the memories of past happiness. Filippi clearly recognizes the nature of Alcina's character and seduction, and filters Ariosto's text through the sorceress's memory and personal perspective while strengthening the connection between Ariosto's evil enchantress and Ovid's Dido. At the same time, as it assumes the form of a conventional romantic relationship, the dalliance between Alcina and Ruggiero is normalised. Thus, Filippi restates the traditional interpretation of Alcina

as a seductive distraction for the epic hero while simultaneously subverting Ariosto's narrative.

### 3.5 Exemplars of virtue: Ginevra, Fiordiligi, Isabella

Thus far, my discussion has focussed on the alterations that Ariosto's chivalric characters undergo as they are rewritten to be adapted to the Ovidian model of the abandoned woman. This section and the one that follows move on to consider the identification between Ariosto's characters and mythical figures, and the consequences of this in terms of Filippi's reinterpretation of the *Furioso's* characters. This aspect, which has already been observed briefly with regard to Alcina and Dido, is particularly significant in terms of exemplarity. This section will discuss how, especially by means of assimilating the chivalric characters of Ariosto and mythical ones, Ginevra and Fiordiligi are represented as exemplars of virtue. Similarly, Isabella is proposed as a model, though her exemplarity is not directly related to mythical heroines but rests on Ariosto's narrative.

Ginevra's letter is peculiar because the Scottish princess never acts or talks in *Orlando furioso*. In fact, while canto V and part of canto VI of the romance are dedicated to the story of Ginevra and Ariodante, the Scottish princess never appears as a character except through the references of others: never appearing directly on the scene, she is represented as the innocent and passive victim of a plot devised by others. Filippi's choice to dedicate a letter to the episode of Ginevra is, then, quite original, as a character otherwise silent in a story paradoxically bearing her name<sup>146</sup> can express her own perspective. Rather than Ariosto, then, her epistle is based on Ovid's model to the extent that it is arguably the most Ovidian letter of the collection.

Ginevra fictionally writes her letter after the apparent happy ending of her story and Ariodante's departure following Rinaldo's call; she laments her fate, which made her a victim of Polinesso's plot and now separates her again from her love. As a faithful wife of a husband who is separated from her because of a war, she is identified with Laodamia, Protesilaus' wife. According to the myth, Protesilaus left for Troy soon after marrying Laodamia and his death caused her such a grief that the gods granted him to leave the underworld for three hours to see his wife, after which she committed suicide in order to follow him. Ovid imagines that Laodamia writes to Protesilaus soon after his departure

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<sup>146</sup> Valeria Finucci, 'The Female Masquerade: Ariosto and the Game of Desire', in *Desire in the Renaissance: Psychoanalysis and Literature*, ed. by Valeria Finucci and Regina Schwartz (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 61-90. She points out the paradox of Ginevra's story at note 42, p. 86.

as she is deeply worried about a prophecy according to which the first Greek to set foot on Trojan land would be the first to die. Consequently, she warns him about the prophecy and recalls her fears and bad omens. By reprising many themes and images from Laodamia's epistle, Filippi associates Ariosto's heroine with Ovid's.

The identification between the two female figures is clearly established from the first stanzas of Ginevra's epistle. Lamenting her present condition, Ginevra notices how natural elements contribute to the worsening of her situation and watches the departing ship from afar:

Se 'l vento a me contrario così presto  
non t'havesse ben mio quindi levato,  
tutto quel, che ti potria esser molesto  
t'avrei fra mille baci ricordato.  
Ma poichè fin il vento mi trovo infesto,  
oltre il voler del mio sinistro fato,  
che cosa, ohimè, sperar potrò già mai,  
che mi conforti ad altro, che a trar guai?

Già questa lingua al tuo da me partire  
non potè per dolor formar parola,  
quando ti vidi in nave al mar salire,  
al crudo mar, ch'ogni mio ben s'invola;  
e gli occhi scorti al mio caldo desire  
seguir la vela tua, che fugge e vola.  
Ond'io come del cor spogliata, e priva,  
caddi, non già come persona viva.

GA, 6-7

Aulide te fama est vento retinente morari;  
a me cum fugeres, hic ubi ventus erat?  
Tum freta debuerant vestris obsistere remis;  
illud erat saevis utile tempus aquis.  
Oscula plura viro mandataque plura dedissem,  
et sunt quae volui dicere multa tibi.

[...]

Dum potui spectare virum, spectare iuvabat  
sumque tuos oculos usque secuta meis.  
Ut te non poteram, poteram tua vela videre,  
vela diu vultus detinere meos.  
At postquam nec te nec vela fugacia vidi,  
et quod spectarem, nil nisi pontus erat,  
lux quoque tecum abiit, tenebrisque exsanguis obortis  
succiduo dicor procubuisse genu.

*Her.* XIII, 3-8, 17-24

While the wind acquires a more sombre connotation as a symbol of Ginevra's uncertain fate, these verses echo the words Laodamia writes to Protesilaus at the beginning of her epistle and, evoking Ovid, represent Ariodante's departure through the heroine's eyes, underlining the intensity of the moment through a clear reference to Dante's *Commedia* (*Inf.* V, 142).<sup>147</sup>

Like Laodamia, Ginevra warns Ariodante against a particular foe ('un fier superbo Rodomonte', here compared to Achilles GA, 13); asks him to stay alive for her sake ('E nel fuggir sì dispietate, e indome | genti, signore, sol per me dei farlo' GA, 14); begs his enemies to spare him ('Io vi priego o pagani, ad uno, ad uno, | che fra tanti nemici perdoniate, | perch'io non muoia, ohimè, solo a quest'uno, | acciò che'l sangue mio con crudeltate | da lui non esca, ov'io tutto il raguno' GA, 15); and reminds them that he is not fighting for his own cause but for love ('Non viene contra voi per guadagnare | questo le vostre spoglie, o 'l vostro honore, | com'altri fanno, che'l suo guerreggiare | sta sotto impero, e sicurtà d'amore' GA, 16). Notably, the expression 'sicurtà d'amore' is taken from the *Furioso*, where it refers to Bradamante and Ruggiero's love (*Of* XXXVI, 34, 4).

Moreover, like Ovid's heroine, Ginevra refuses to take on 'i real panni' while her husband 'si veste altrove il ferro', which is a clear reference to Laodamia's refusal to take on royal power:

Debbo dunque vestir i real panni  
spesso rispondo altrui, se il caro sposo  
si veste altrove il ferro, e con affanni  
vive fra l'armi stanco, e polveroso?  
Debb'io la testa ornar, se ne' miei danni  
la sua le preme l'elmo ponderoso?  
Così in parte i tuoi gesti vo imitando;  
ed in questo trapasso sospirando.

Scilicet ipsa geram saturatas murice vestes,  
bella sub Iliacis moenibus ille geret;  
ipsa comas pectar, galea caput ille prematur;  
ipsa novas vestes, dura vir arma feret?  
Qua possum, squalore tuos imitata labores  
dicar et haec belli tempora tristis agam.

*Her.* XIII, 37- 42

GA, 11

This stanza is almost a literal rewriting of Ovid's text: the heroine shows her complete devotion to her husband by refusing her royal role and assuming the classical one of the abandoned woman.

Ginevra and Laodamia are implicitly compared as both are left by their husbands because of a war. However, while Protesilaus was doomed because of a prophecy, the fate of Ariodante is unknown, as after his marriage to Ginevra he is only briefly mentioned in *Orlando furioso* (*Of* X, 86; XVI, 55-78; XVIII, 56-58, 155). Moreover,

<sup>147</sup> The reference to Dante is noted by Perroni Grande (Perroni Grande, p. 8).



Laodamia was regarded as an example of wifely virtues: according to Nannini, Laodamia's story 'dimostra quanto sia grande la sollecitudine et il pensiero d'una legittima moglie, che sinceramente e pudicamente ami il suo marito'.<sup>148</sup> Through Laodamia, then, Ginevra becomes the model of a lawful and modest wife. Since in the *Furioso* Ginevra is described as 'di vera pudicizia paragone' (*Of* IV, 62) and she loves Ariodante 'con cor sincero e con perfetta fede' (*Of* V, 19), Filippi restates her exemplarity by grounding it in the moralised reading of Ovid's Laodamia.

Significantly, Laodamia also features as the main model in Fiordiligi's epistle. As in the case of Ginevra, the association with Laodamia is evident from continuous references to Ovid. However, Fiordiligi's letter is built on a more complex intertextual web of references and allusions to both Ariosto and Ovid. In *Orlando furioso*, Fiordiligi's husband Brandimarte dies in the duel of Lipadusa, which causes her such grief that she eventually dies of heartache. The similarity between her tragic destiny and Laodamia's is evident: both are left widowed because of a war and die because of grief. The association between Laodamia and Fiordiligi is clearly established from the first stanzas: in the verse 'e quanto hor'io ti scrivo, arei voluto | dirloti già molte fiate, e molte' (FB, 2) there is an echo of 'et sunt quae volui dicere multa tibi' (*Her.*, XIII, 8). Further references to the Ovidian model are the heroine's fears foreshadowing the lover's death at the hand of his enemies, and especially the portrait of the beloved husband as substitute for his physical absence. Fiordiligi can only find solace in the company of her husband's 'ritratto pietoso' (FB, 14), an element built upon Laodamia's icon of Protesilaus:

Oh quante volte io bacio a parte a parte  
il tuo ritratto, ed egli anco il consente;  
consente già, perché mai non si parte  
dal mio cospetto a lui sempre presente.  
Tal'hor li narro lagrimando parte  
del desiderio mio vivo, e cocente  
e se ben non mi dona aiuto, almeno  
non mi cela il sembiante almo, e sereno.

Né sento altro gioir fra tanto affanno,  
che contemplar del tuo ritratto il viso.  
Miro i begli occhi, indi le labbra c'hanno  
quanto si può del vero, eccetto il riso.  
Poi discendendo in giù li occhi mi vanno  
a quel, che m'ha dal petto il cor diviso,  
ma che mi giova, ohimè, se poi con mano  
io tocco su la tela il pensier vano?

FB, 15-16

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<sup>148</sup> Nannini, p. 143.

quae referat vultus est mihi cera tuos;  
 illi blanditias, illi tibi debita verba  
 dicimus, amplexus accipit illa meos.  
 Crede mihi, plus est quam quod videatur, imago;  
 adde sonum cerae, Protesilaus erit.  
 Hanc specto teneoque sinu pro coniuge vero  
 et, tamquam possit verba referre, queror.

*Her. XIII, 150-156*

The Ovidian element of the portrait of the beloved husband is treated in a Petrarchan light. Emphasised by its occupying three stanzas, the importance of the beloved's portrait as a source of solace raises typically Petrarchan issues regarding the vanity of all things. The main issue concerning the icon is its closeness to reality in contrast with its vanity. In the Petrarchan fashion, the image eventually reveals itself to be a vain idol, unveiling that 'quanto ne i cori nostri ingombra | fugge dal senso altrui, qual sogno, et ombra' (FB, 17). Furthermore, through Brandimarte's portrait his tragic destiny is revealed: dreaming of Brandimarte being killed by Gradasso, suddenly Fiordiligi wakes up and hears the portrait falling from the wall, the fall of the icon clearly symbolising that of the hero.

Omens of the tragic fate of Brandimarte also feature in the *Furioso* and are reprised by Filippi. In Ariosto's romance, Brandimarte's death is foreshadowed during and after his departure. Before he leaves, Fiordiligi sews some 'sopraveste oscure et atre' for her husband, who thus wishes to honour his deceased father. Filled with sadness and apprehension in her heart, she imagines him amidst dangerous battles (*Of XLI, 33*). Furthermore, the day before learning of his death, Fiordiligi has an ominous dream: the black garment she gave Brandimarte appears to her covered in red drops, as if she sewed it that way against his wishes (*Of XLII, 155-156*). Fiordiligi interprets this dream as a bad omen and soon learns of her husband's death from Astolfo and Sansonetto. In the stanzas following the arrival of the sad news, Ariosto describes the heroine's utter despair, her subsequent lament over her beloved's death, her regret for not having followed him and her cries against their cruel fate. Thus, Filippi chooses the most dramatic moment for the heroine to write to her lover, as it is not only the moment of waiting, but also of a wait especially characterised by Fiordiligi's 'novità d'aver timore' (*Of XLI, 33, 7*). In particular, the colour of the black garment Fiordiligi sewed for Brandimarte causes 'un insolito timore' (FB 18): the presence of the garment as an ominous sign is an intertextual reference to Ariosto, whose narrative device foreshadowing Brandimarte's fate is here clearly recalled together with Ariosto's words. Fiordiligi's letter is thus structured on a

particularly complex web of references: allusions to Ariosto are encased in a scheme of Ovidian references which is clearly delineated.

While both Fiordiligi and Laodamia were regarded as exemplars of wifely virtues, their identification seems to be an original idea of Filippi. However, the Ovidian heroine is not the only one with which Fiordiligi is associated. In *Orlando furioso*, Fiordiligi laments that she did not follow her husband in his mission and curses the cruel destiny that kept them apart for so long (*Of*, XLII, 163; XLIII, 160-162). In Fiordiligi's letter similar complaints are accompanied by reflections on the nature of love and, significantly, by a list of exemplary wives from history and myth. The mention of exemplary faithful wives reinforces the connection between Fiordiligi and Laodamia as well as underscores the virtues of Ariosto's heroine. More specifically, Fiordiligi mentions Zenobia, Hypsicratea and Portia: the choice of these three legendary women is clearly made on the basis of their symbolic value as wives who followed their husbands to the end. Zenobia, the chaste queen of Palmyra, scorned male companionship except in giving her husband heirs to the kingdom, performing her duty as wife and queen. Unlike Zenobia, Fiordiligi regrets that she is not able to give Brandimarte a progeny (FB, 10), since destiny is keeping them apart. She then wishes to follow him the way Hypsicratea, the queen of Pontus, followed her husband Mithridates to his death. The highest of this *klimax* of tragic *exempla* is reached by mentioning Portia, wife to Brutus, who killed herself by swallowing hot coals after her husband's defeat. Fiordiligi promises to commit suicide too (though with a sword) were her grief for Brandimarte's death not enough to kill her.

All these heroines were very well known at Filippi's time as exemplars of wifely virtues. Well-established legendary figures, they appear in Petrarch's *Trionfi* and, more importantly, in Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris*. In his thorough account of the presence of exemplary and legendary women in the *querelle des femmes*, Stephen Kolsky has pointed out that *De mulieribus claris* in particular was used as 'architext: a definitive model for those subsequent writers and compilers who sought to justify "famous women" as a worthy concept and theme'.<sup>149</sup> Consequently, Zenobia, Hypsicratea and Portia recurrently feature in works connected with the *querelle des femmes* as symbols of marital fidelity. The exemplarity of Fiordiligi is therefore underlined not only in relation to her tragic death but also in her active role as wife, as Zenobia protected her children, Hypsicratea followed her husband disguised as a man and Portia was completely

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<sup>149</sup> Petrarch, *Triumphus Cupidinis III*, 28-30 (Hypsicratea) and 31 (Portia); *Triumphus Famae II*, 107-117 (Zenobia). Boccaccio, *De Mulieribus Claris*, LXXVIII (Hypsicratea), LXXXII (Portia), C (Zenobia); Stephen Kolsky, *The Ghost of Boccaccio: Writings on Famous Women in Renaissance Italy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), p.4. Kolsky focusses on the first half of the Cinquecento.

committed to her husband's political cause. In continuous dialogue with both Ovid and Ariosto, Filippi then refashions Fiordiligi as a wife more exemplary than she was originally by stressing her connection to illustrious heroines who epitomise conjugal devotion, putting her on a par with them.

Though not explicitly associated with a mythical character, Isabella is also proposed as an illustrious and exemplary heroine. Noting the harshness of her condition in contrast with her past hopes, Isabella lingers on her fears and worries by writing of her cruel treatment at the hands of Gabrina and her fear of being attacked by wild beasts. Significantly, her only source of strength is her love for Zerbino: unlike in the other letters, the heroine's love is not the cause of her torment but, on the contrary, represents her only hope. Notably, she never doubts nor reproaches Zerbino, praised as 'il più bel cavalier di tutto il mondo' (IZ 22),<sup>150</sup> and only a reminder of the initial ardour of his love accompanies her final request for help. Filippi's portrait of Isabella, a fearful woman held prisoner in dark cave, is that of an exemplary heroine who endures her fate in the name of love, while, as an exemplary knight, Zerbino is represented as worthy of her pure love. Filippi depicts both Isabella and Zerbino as faithful lovers and therefore as a couple epitomising true love and fidelity. By magnifying their exemplarity Filippi's reinterpretation of both characters reinforces Ariosto's representation as well as the allegorical and moral meaning commentators gave to Isabella's story. In the *Furioso* Isabella is explicitly acknowledged as a positive example of feminine virtue due to her choosing death rather than betraying the late Zerbino; her exemplarity was also pointed out in the allegories prefacing canto XXIX in the Valgrisi edition of 1556 and in that by Valvassori of 1566, where Ariosto's heroine teaches how women should die chastely rather than living in shame, and by Toscanella, according to whom she allegorically represents *pudicizia*.<sup>151</sup> Filippi builds on Ariosto's text and reshapes Isabella as an exemplary heroine on a par with Ovid's abandoned women.

### 3.6 Condemning shameful desire: Fiordispina

At the opposite spectrum of the virtuous exemplars represented by Ginevra, Fiordiligi and Isabella is the figure of Fiordispina. Fiordispina, in fact, shares a significant feature with Alcina: the negative allegorical meaning Ariosto's commentators attached to them. As in the case of the evil sorceress, the rewriting of Fiordispina implies a significant

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<sup>150</sup> This verse echoes Ariosto: '[...] nel più degno e bel che ci sia al mondo' (*Of* XIII, 7)

<sup>151</sup> Valgrisi 1556, Y8<sup>v</sup>; Valvassori 1566 (Y3<sup>v</sup>), Toscanella, A2<sup>r</sup>.

alteration of Ariosto's character as well as the neutralization of her subversive potential, as she is represented as an abandoned woman exemplifying shameful passion.

In the *Furioso*, the story of Fiordispina and Ricciardetto, resumed from Boiardo and based on the myth of Iphis from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*,<sup>152</sup> does not have a definite ending, as we do not know what happens to Fiordispina after Ruggiero rescues Ricciardetto. The Spanish princess Fiordispina, who mistook Bradamante for a handsome knight, fell hopelessly in love with her. In love with Fiordispina, Bradamante's twin brother makes her believe he is his sister after a magical change of sex. Dressed up as a woman, Ricciardetto lives in Fiordispina's room until they are discovered and her father condemns him to be burnt at the stake. In Ariosto's narrative, Ricciardetto tells the story of Fiordispina to Ruggiero after being rescued: the story is thus framed by an adventure episode, as defined by Mac Carthy.<sup>153</sup> However, unlike other adventure episodes, this does not feature a damsel in distress, as it is the male protagonist, Ricciardetto, who is eventually saved. In Filippi's fiction, after Ruggiero rescues Ricciardetto, the Spanish princess writes a letter to reassure him of her everlasting love from the tower where her father has confined her after learning of the ruse.

Taking his cue from Ariosto, Filippi thematically structures the heroine's letter around the elements defining Ariosto's character rather than evoking specific passages from the *Furioso*. In Ariosto's poem, Fiordispina is characterised from the beginning as the victim of an overwhelming attraction for Bradamante, which turns into a burning desire, a fire which once started cannot be stopped, as highlighted by the frequent use of the fire metaphors in relation to the heroine. A common *topos* in lyric poetry, in Fiordispina's episode such metaphors are predominant and defining for the construction of her character. Hence Ariosto mentions Fiordispina's 'occhi ardenti' and 'sospir di fuoco', her 'alma di desio consunta', her 'desiderio [...] senza fine', her 'folle e van disio; she is victim of 'una scintilla del fuoco' that 'non si smorza' so that 'sempre il suo desir sia più focoso' (*Of*, XXV, 29, 5-6; 32, 5-6; 34, 8; 38, 7; 42, 4). In this context, it is notable that Ricciardetto is condemned to be burnt for the fulfillment of his desire, and eventually saved, while Fiordispina's fate is unknown.

The heroine's desire is distinguished by its impossibility and unnatural quality: in her lament over her love for Bradamante, Fiordispina compares herself to mythical heroines who were also victims of shameful passions, notably Semiramis, Pasiphae and Myrrha, lamenting that her desire is even more impossible to fulfill than theirs (*Of* XXV, 34-37).

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<sup>152</sup> Ovid, *Met.* IX, 666-797.

<sup>153</sup> Mac Carthy, pp. 95-96.

Significantly, these same legendary female figures are mentioned also in Rodomonte's letter, as will be discussed in 3.7. Mary-Michelle Decoste has pointed out that Fiordispina's desire is potentially subversive because it 'renders irrelevant not only the categories of homosexual and heterosexual, but also those of man and woman',<sup>154</sup> and has argued that such subversive potential is diminished by Ricciardetto's narrative, which aligns the satisfaction of Fiordispina's desire with Bradamante's possession of the male organ.<sup>155</sup> Filippi gives a voice to Fiordispina by reimagining her as a traditional damsel in distress, as she writes as a captive in a tower. Moreover, while Ricciardetto's alleged change of sex allows for the normalisation of her desire, Fiordispina still writes of her desire as insane and strange. Ultimately, Fiordispina's role as abandoned woman is normalised as she is offered as a negative *exemplum* of lustful love.

Filippi follows Ariosto by elaborating only on the thematic element of the heroine's burning desire. The letter presents a series of variations on one main theme through the use of mythological examples to express and magnify Fiordispina's feelings. Thus, for instance, the element of the fire to which Ricciardetto is condemned is here represented in an emotional light connecting Fiordispina's love and Ricciardetto's (avoided) fate:

Nè creder già, cor mio, che quando il foco  
fu per bruciarti in piazza apparecchiato,  
non giongesse il mio cor ratto in quel loco  
a consumarsi, e starti sempre a lato.  
Anzi un ardor lasciommi, ch'assai poco  
facea l'incendio a li tuoi danni armato;  
ove quasi candela hor quì m'allumo,  
e fo luce a me stessa, e mi consumo.

Però cor mio mi brucio tanto, ed ardo  
ch'amor non m'ha fin qui al suo stile avezza;  
or ch'egli mi ci avezza così al tardo  
ne sento al cor non mai sentita asprezza.  
*Come cavallo indomito e gagliardo  
messo a portar la sella e la cavezza,  
e come suol sentir giovenco o toro  
del duro gioco il primo aspro lavoro.*

FR, 3-4

Compared to the actual fire that was prepared for her lover, the emotion of the heroine is stronger and more consuming. As references to fire and burning desire, counterbalanced by the image of ice as per the Petrarchan tradition, provide the main theme of the letter,

<sup>154</sup> Mary-Michelle DeCoste, *Hopeless love: Boiardo, Ariosto, and Narratives of Queer Female Desire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), p. 86.

<sup>155</sup> DeCoste, p. 86.

the heroine is depicted coherently with Ariosto's definition of her character. Moreover, by alluding to the epistle of Phaedra to Hippolytus, Filippi implicitly associates Ariosto's character with Ovid's. Writing to seduce her stepson, Phaedra compares her love to an indomitable horse and bull: 'scilicet ut teneros laedunt iuga prima iuencos | frenaque vix patitur de grege captus equus, | sic male vixque subit primos rude pectus amores' (*Her.* IV 21-23). As emphasised, Filippi almost literally alludes to Ovid's comparison. Moreover, Phaedra's letter also begins with explicit references to the writer's burning love for the dedicatee: 'nostra avido foveat igne medullas', 'urimur intus' (*Her.* IV 16, 19). Fiordispina and Phaedra also share a similar situation insofar as neither is free to openly express their feelings. Significantly, Ariosto's character and Ovid's are associated for their burning and unbound sexual desire. As Phaedra is a negative mythological figure who, as seen in 2.3, is condemned as an example of lasciviousness by Nannini, Ariosto's character is also indicated as a negative example of lustful love.

Mythical images and comparisons underpin the thematic development of the epistle and reiterate the peculiarity of her desire. After acknowledging her situation as a prisoner not allowed to show her emotions, Fiordispina writes that her condition makes her similar to 'ogni altra meraviglia | strana, e diversa al mondo' (FR, 7). Hence, due to the impossibility of expressing her emotions she compares herself to monstrous mythical peoples like the Astomi, legendary creatures who survive only by smelling, and the headless Blemmyes, who have mouths and eyes on their chest. She then emphasises her desire and her dependence on it through a reiterated use of various images connected to fire and sun, listing a number of peoples and creatures whose lives are particularly connected to the solar cycle, the hemerobius, an insect which lives only one day, and the hyperboreans, who enjoy six months of sunlight followed by six months of darkness. Based on a Petrarchan poetics of opposites, classical comparisons and images metaphorically define the desire that she is forced to conceal and stress its uniqueness.

By emphasising only one character trait, the heroine's consuming desire, through erudite classical references, Filippi highlights the exceptionality of Fiordispina on the one hand and reduces the ambiguity of her character and her story on the other. His rewriting is grounded in the traditional reading of Ariosto's episode: according to Valvassori, Ricciardetto and Fiordispina's episode shows the dangers lovers can incur when pursuing an 'Amor lascivo'<sup>156</sup> and, according to Toscanella, the tale of Fiordispina symbolises 'l'impudicitia' and 'l'amor libidinoso, et stravagante e sfrenatissimo'.<sup>157</sup> Fiordispina's

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<sup>156</sup> Valvassori's introductory *allegoria* of canto XXV (Valvassori 1566, S8<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>157</sup> Toscanella, A1<sup>v</sup>.

complex desire is thus incorporated within a traditional allegorical narrative and her story is to be opposed to the virtuous examples set by other female characters. Following the moralising reading of his time, then, Filippi represents Fiordispina as a traditional abandoned woman as well as the victim of an exceptional lustful desire, and implicitly condemns her for the unnatural nature of her love. As Fiordispina's ambiguous desire is brought back to the traditional realm of mythological fables of unnatural loves, the ambiguity and subversive potential of the episode are neutralised while Ariosto's narrative is restated. Fiordispina thus becomes an exemplary figure to be opposed to Fiordiligi, Ginevra and Isabella, like the shameful Phaedra is to be opposed to the virtuous Laodamia.

### 3.7 Counterbalancing the female voice: the male perspective

The letters discussed so far are all fictionally authored by female characters. However, three of Filippi's letters are fictionally written by male characters, namely Rodomonte, Sacripante, and Rinaldo. They thus give voice to the male perspective, which counterbalances the female one. The male-authored letters are not only different from the female-authored ones but also from each other. Rodomonte writes to defame Doralice, who has rejected him, while both Rinaldo and Sacripante write to Angelica to seduce her. As Rodomonte is represented as an epitome of misogynistic prejudice, particular attention is here given to his letter, while the epistles of Rinaldo and Sacripante, which share the addressee and a common intent, are discussed in the following section. A rewriting of Rodomonte's misogynistic monologue from the *Furioso* (*Of XXVII*, 117-121), his epistle is fictionally written with the explicit purpose of denouncing women's fickleness and defaming the female sex. Consistently with the traditional understanding of the *Heroides* as a work instructing in the dynamics of love and female nature, the misogynistic rhetoric of the epistle counterbalances the female perspective grounding the other letters and the exemplarity of Ariosto's heroines.

Rodomonte fictionally writes to Doralice after she chooses Mandricardo over him. His misogynistic epistle is grounded on references to his monologue in the *Furioso*, including the use of the same words and almost literal quotations of textual segments: 'perfide, ingrante, odiose tutte' and 'natura femina sei detta' (RD 9, 12) echo 'temararie, crudeli, inique, ingrante' and 'natura femina vien detta' (*Of XXXVII*, 121, 7; 120, 8). Thus, closely following Ariosto through a repetition in terms of themes, rhyming patterns, and citations, Rodomonte's letter takes the shape of an outburst not only against the unfaithful Doralice



but also against the entire female gender, which is deemed to be unreliable and fickle by its own nature. In his rage, the rejected knight recalls classical misogynistic stereotypes depicting women as irrational and born to men's misfortune.

Rodomonte's fictional reason for writing is the desire to shame Doralice, since it is beneath him to shed a woman's blood:

Avend'io stolto speso inutilmente  
sì gran tempo in amarti e farti honore,  
convien che spenda un breve spatio, e tente  
di palesarti il mio commesso errore.  
Anzi farò che 'l mondo in ogni gente  
sappia il mio sdegno con tuo dishonore,  
poiché mi si disdice l'imbrattarmi  
nel sangue femminil le mani e l'armi.

RD, 1

For Rodomonte, the letter becomes a weapon for the defamation of Doralice, and eventually the female gender, on a par with the hero's sword. Furthermore, as the hero is the abandoned one and the heroine the betrayer, the traditional roles are reversed. Thus, while the male betrayer is conventionally accused of cruelty, the heroine is especially guilty of being capricious and fickle. In this reversal of roles, the beginning of the letter is based on the same *topoi* that characterise the heroines' epistles: Rodomonte blushes and turns pale, is stupefied and cannot believe that his beloved, called *perfida* and *crudel*, could forget him so easily.

In order to further emphasise Doralice's misleading behaviour and denounce the irrationality of love, Filippi specifically refers to another textual passage from the *Furioso*, the description of Rodomonte's emblem:

*Ne la bandiera mia tutta vermiglia*  
spiegavo stolto in forma quasi viva  
un leon, che la bocca *ad una briglia*,  
che le ponevi tu spietata apriva.  
Né pensai che l'impresa m'*assomiglia*  
a la fiera crudel di ragion priva;  
e fu ben ver, che senza alcun discorso  
mi lasciai por da te gran tempo il morso.

RD, 6

*Ne la bandiera, ch'è tutta vermiglia,*  
Rodomonte di Sarza il leon spiega,  
che la feroce bocca *ad una briglia*  
che gli pon la sua donna, aprir non niega.  
Al leon se medesimo *assimiglia*;  
e per la donna che lo frena e lega,  
la bella Doralice ha figurata,  
figlia di Stordilan re di Granata:

*Of XIV, 114*

Structuring the stanza around distinct textual echoes to Ariosto, Filippi adapts his description of the Saracen's emblem to the elegiac discourse of the epistle. The allegorical meaning of the emblem is reversed: it does not depict a woman tempering an impetuous

beast, as in the *Furioso*, but rather it is the wild beast allowing her to control him because of its lack of reason, as the following stanza further clarifies:

Oh quante volte io penso a gli atti molli  
ch'io feci nel seguir di te la traccia.  
Oh come me ne scorno, e par che bolli  
la vergogna ch'ogn'hor m'avvampa in faccia.  
Anzi vorrei pensando a tanti folli  
miei gesti esser sotterra mille braccia  
hor, che sì chiaramente nel pensiero  
mi mostra la ragion il falso e il vero.

Mi mostra la ragion, ch'or mi governa,  
l'error, ch'io feci in procurarmi affanno,  
e cangiar quella mia quiete interna  
con un espresso e faticoso danno,  
per te perfida donna, infamia eterna  
del sesso tutto fraude, e tutto inganno;  
per te lieve, e volubil più che foglia,  
quando l'autunno gli arbori ne spoglia.

RD, 7-8

The traditional representation of courtly love is reversed insofar as love prompts men to do foolish deeds which only a return to reason would reveal as shameful. Through the traditional Petrarchan true-false dichotomy, the scorned knight represents his situation as a liberation from his previous condition of captivity in an 'empia soglia' and 'fiero intrico' (RD 17, 18). Rodomonte, then, denounces the fallacy of love as an irrational sentiment causing chaos and leading men to shameful actions. In this regard, it is notable that love's irrational nature and its chaotic consequences are major themes underpinning the narrative of *Orlando furioso*. Thus, the representation of love in Rodomonte's epistle as directly opposed to reason recalls Orlando and his loss of wit following the shock of discovering Angelica's liaison with Medoro.

Furthermore, the negative exemplarity of Doralice is made more evident by a reference to another episode of the *Furioso* in stanza 8. The comparison of the fickle Doralice to an unstable autumn leaf is taken from Ariosto's text, where it originally referred to Gabrina:

Ma costei, più volubile che foglia  
quando l'autunno è più priva d'umore,  
che'l freddo vento gli arbori ne spoglia,  
e le soffia dinanzi al suo furore;  
verso il marito cangiò tosto voglia,  
che fisso qualche tempo ebbe nel core;  
e volse ogni pensiero, ogni disio  
d'acquistar per amante il fratel mio.

*Of* XXI, 15

In canto XXI, Ermonide of Holland tells his story to Zerbino and informs him of Gabrina's evil deeds, including her desire for Ermonide's brother and her subsequent plotting against him. The reference to this episode is condensed in two verses (RD, 8, 7-8) which distinctly reprise Ariosto's text through the rhyme 'foglia | spoglia' and segments such as 'gli albori ne spoglia' (*Of*, XXI, 15, 1-3), and imply the identification between the lascivious Gabrina, who betrayed her husband Argeo, and Doralice, who was betrothed to Rodomonte. Distinguished by an unbound lasciviousness leading to evil, the character of Gabrina counter-balances the positive examples of other heroines, and her villainousness is mentioned also in Isabella's letter: the implicit comparison between her and Doralice, then, renders the latter more morally condemnable.

As in Ariosto, so in Filippi the invective against the dedicatee turns into an invective against all women, regarded as the source of every vice and conflict, and Rodomonte recalls traditional misogynistic stereotypes. Filippi, however, further elaborates on them, including providing a small catalogue of negative *exempla*. His Rodomonte denounces women's fleeting and deceptive beauty as well as their natural propensity to shameful desires, which is significantly explicated by the mythical cases of Pasiphae, Myrrha and Semiramis:

Già fu Minosse, già fu possente,  
e di bellezza e di giustizia esempio,  
e l'ingorda sua moglie per l'ardente  
vitio sfogarsi scelerato et empio  
si sottomesse al toro, onde la gente  
d'Athene ebbe al mostro il crudo scempio.  
Ma dove è Mirra, che dal padre colse  
quel, che Semiramis dal figlio volse?

RD 16

The three mythical figures are mentioned as examples of the nefarious consequences of women's innate weakness towards sexual desires and thus reinforce the negative exemplarity of Doralice, who, like Pasiphae, was not satisfied by her exemplary lover.

The negative *exempla* represented by Pasiphae, Myrrha, and Semiramis, significantly recalled also in Fiordispina's lament in the *Furioso*, as seen in 3.6, offer an exemplary catalogue that is opposed to and counterbalances the exemplars of feminine virtue represented by Laodamia, Zenobia, Hypsicratea, and Portia, like Doralice is opposed to Fiordiligi, Ginevra and Isabella.

In Rodomonte's letter, love is represented as a condition of blinding irrationality: free from such a condition, the Saracen knight is finally able to see reality, such as true female nature, beyond the veil of deceit. The first-hand experience of his error ('toccar con mano l'error mio' RD 18) leads him to the revelation of truth. Notably, the gesture of realising one's error through touch is also that which leads Fiordispina to realise the truth of Bradamante's sex ('nel destar mette la mano | e ritrova pur sempre il sogno vano' *Of* XXV, 43, 7-8). Rodomonte realises that Doralice's looks are only 'carne, e sì forbita | con l'arte già, che la natura aita' (RD, 19): invoking another traditional accusation against women, with the aid of nature female deceptiveness extends to women's physical appearance. The misogynistic invective then escalates, and the letter is ended abruptly by Rodomonte, who dismisses the subject as unworthy of further discussion and expresses his wish for the extinction of the whole female gender.

Filippi re-proposes the character of Rodomonte, already characterised by scorn and spite towards women in *Orlando furioso*, as the epitome of misogynistic feelings and prejudice. As the Saracen knight's misogynistic outburst allows for engaging with the themes of love and female nature from the perspective of a scorned hero, his viewpoint contrasts with the antimartial feminine rhetoric that characterises the letters of abandoned heroines, and the representation of love and female characters that underpins them. The representation of Rodomonte as the epitome of the scorned lover, moreover, results in the simplification of Ariosto's character, whose hatred for women is counterbalanced by his subsequent love for Isabella. Filippi's representation of Rodomonte and Doralice is grounded in the moralising and allegorical readings of Ariosto's romance. As an abandoned lover, in fact, Rodomonte was considered the symbol of scorn and Doralice that of female fickleness.<sup>158</sup> However, commentators also noted that Rodomonte's story eventually disproved his speech and showed how unnatural it is for men to hate women.<sup>159</sup> Filippi, then, stresses Rodomonte's misogynistic moment on the one hand and Doralice's fickleness on the other while simultaneously playing with Ariosto, whose text is

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<sup>158</sup> See in particular Valvassori 1566, V5<sup>v</sup>; and Fontanella, A1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>159</sup> See Valgrisi 1556, Y2<sup>v</sup>.

constantly echoed and whose narrative undermines Rodomonte's misogynistic arguments.

### 3.8 Chasing after Angelica: the suitors' perspective

Rodomonte's perspective is not the only male one voiced in Filippi's work, as two other letters are fictionally authored by male characters. Unlike Rodomonte's epistle, the purpose of the letters of Sacripante and Rinaldo is to seduce the same dedicatee, Angelica. They are, then, written from the perspective of a male suitor. Despite a similar goal, however, the two letters are very different in the way they attempt to reach it. As the two knights write as lovers to seduce a lady that rejected them, both the fictional authors and the dedicatee are represented in a different light than in the *Furioso*.

Unlike the abandoned heroines, who write to convince their lovers to return, and Rodomonte, who writes to shame Doralice, Sacripante and Rinaldo write to seduce the addressee, following the Ovidian models of Paris and Aconthius. While abandonment characterises the Ovidian heroine, the male experience of lovesickness usually takes the form of rejection: Rinaldo and Sacripante are not abandoned or betrayed but rather ignored and rejected by Angelica, who flees from all the knights in love with her. Moreover, in the case of Rinaldo, the paladin differs from her other suitors, as Angelica finds him insufferable after drinking from the fountain of disdain. As the epistles of Sacripante and Rinaldo share the same addressee and a similar situation, they provide the opportunity to analyse the different perspectives through which Filippi approaches the subject of their love for Angelica.

Both letters develop one main theme: Rinaldo focusses on the beloved's beauty and Sacripante on his lovesickness. Rinaldo's letter is entirely built on a *descriptio puellae* culminating in a Horatian *carpe diem*. The idea of structuring a letter around the description of the beloved's exceptional beauty may have been inspired by the description of Cydippe in Aconthius' letter (*Her.* XX, 55-64); only one verse refers specifically to Ovid's Paris (*Her.* XVI, 290). The physical description of the Cathay princess then occupies most of Rinaldo's letter, justified by his urge to describe her beauty in order to expose the injustice of her coldness. Traditionally associated with the courtly Petrarchan canon, the *descriptio puellae* magnifies Angelica's beauty as well as her virtue while the lover laments the coldness of his mistress by contrasting it with her superhuman charms. Thus, the letter begins with the *excusatio* of the writer who is not able to give justice to her 'beltà [...] angelica at immortale' (RA, 2) and can only compare it to unworthy earthly

elements. More importantly, the description of Angelica distinctly echoes Ariosto's text. In *Orlando furioso*, Ariosto does not give an objective description of Angelica but rather defines her through the eyes of the wandering knights. Her only aesthetic description is made from the perspective of Ruggiero, who sees a naked Angelica chained to a rock and about to be sacrificed to a sea-monster in canto X. In Rinaldo's letter Filippi refers to descriptions of heroines of exceptional beauty in the *Furioso*, including especially Alcina, and provides a more detailed and conventional description of the princess through the eyes of her pursuer.

Rinaldo's words evoke the description of Angelica when, on the island of Ebuda, she appears to Ruggiero 'come natura prima la compose' (*Of* X, 95, 4):

Pensar non so donde Natura colse  
il vivo minio, e le *vermiglie rose*,  
quando al tenero latte por le volse  
per far le guance dolci, et amorose.  
Indi per consumarsi vi raccolse  
d'ardente foco mille fiamme ascose.  
Queste non a *ligustro, rosa, o giglio*,  
ma a le guancie d'Angelica assomiglio.

RA, 9

[...]  
Un velo non ha pure, in che richiuda  
*i bianchi gigli e le vermiglie rose*,  
da non cader per luglio o per dicembre,  
di che son sparse le polite membre.

Creduto avria che fosse statua finta  
O d'alabastro o d'altri marmi illustri  
Ruggiero, e su lo scoglio così avinta  
per artificio di scultori industri;  
se non vedea la lacrima distinta  
tra *fresche rose e candidi ligustri*  
far rugiadosa le crudette pome,  
e l'aura sventolar l'aurate chiome.

*Of* X, 95-96

Like Ariosto, Filippi identifies Angelica's charms with roses and privets, and Angelica as Nature's work of art. Filippi's Rinaldo, moreover, emphasises the heroine's incomparable beauty through distinct references to Alcina. Ariosto's description of Alcina is more detailed than Angelica's or any other heroine's, since the superhuman beauty of the sorceress is evidence of her magical seduction. Also Alcina is 'tanto ben formata, | quanto me' finger san pittori industri' (*Of* VII, 11, 1-2); Filippi also conceptually follows Ariosto's model in this case:

ello, e dritto *naso* è proprio a punto  
 proportionato al delicato volto,  
 dove *il più non ha menda in esso aggiunto*,  
 né il meno anco del bel nulla n'ha tolto  
 [...]

Che debbo dir, che mi consigli Amore  
 de le candide perle orientali,  
 ch'a *le filze son perle*, e di colore  
 al latte, ed a la neve sono eguali?  
 Quinci la dolce bocca manda fuore  
 con sì soave suono accenti tali,  
 che vincon l'armonia, con cui si gira  
 l'opera immensa, ch'ogni spirto ammira.

[...]  
 La bella bocca, ch'odor tanto spira  
 forma quel dolce, e *lampeggiante riso*,  
 che a mezo i denti le labia ritira  
 quando apre dolcemente *il Paradiso*.

RA, 10; 12-13

[...]  
 Spargeasi per la guancia delicata  
 misto color di rose e di ligustri;  
 di terso avorio era la fronte lieta,  
 che lo spazio finia con giusta meta.

Sotto due negri e sottilissimi archi  
 son duo negri occhi, anzi duo chiaro  
 soli,  
 pietosi a riguardare, a mover parchi;  
 intorno cui par ch'Amore scherzi e voli,  
 e ch'indi tutta la faretra scarchi,  
 e che visibilmente i cori involi:  
 quindi il *naso* per mezzo il viso scende,  
 che *non truova l'Invidia ove l'emende*.

Sotto quel sta, quasi fra due vallette,  
 la bocca sparsa di natio cinabro;  
 quivi *due filze son di perle elette*,  
 che chiude at apre un bello e dolce  
 labro:  
 quindi escon le cortesi parolette  
 da render molle ogni cor rozzo e scabro;  
 quivi si forma quel *suave riso*,  
 ch'apre a sua posta in terra *il paradiso*.

Of, VII 11-13

Parallels between Ariosto and Filippi's description of female beauty can be found throughout the letter. While all these elements (*vermiglie rose, gigli, ligustri, perle...*) were part of an established classical tradition,<sup>160</sup> the echoes of Ariosto's text that are emphasised show that Filippi refers especially to the *Furioso*, particularly through the characters of Angelica and Alcina. As Rinaldo writes as a man hopelessly in love in order to seduce Angelica, he amplifies the traditional elements already present in the source-text, to the point that the description of Angelica occupies 18 stanzas compared with the 6 stanzas Ariosto dedicates to Alcina (*Of* VII, 11-16).

Furthermore, since the letter has the purpose of persuading the addressee to give in to the suitor's love, Angelica's beauty and her virtuous nature are praised and remarked upon throughout the letter with the specific purpose of seducing her. In the light of such intention, Rinaldo reminds her of the fleeting nature of beauty and how this should therefore be enjoyed, and accuses her of unnatural behaviour: while 'ogni animal, [...] s'accompagna | al natural compagno' she prefers 'in non usate tempre | andar solinga, e scompagnata sempre' (RA, 29). After reminding Angelica that '[her] beltà vecchiezza |

<sup>160</sup> See Emilio Bigi's comments to these octaves in *Orlando furioso*, pp. 251-252.

cangierà tosto' (RA 31), Rinaldo concludes that 'star non ponno insieme senza lite | la castitate, e le bellezze unite' (RA, 32), which clearly echoes 'lis est cum forma magna pudicitiae' in Paris' letter (*Her.* XVI, 290), asking her to believe in the sincerity of his words. Angelica's behaviour is, then, subtly chastised both for her insensitivity to her lover's pleas and not conforming to social norms.

Ultimately an invitation to seize the day and enjoy the pleasures of love while still young and beautiful, Rinaldo's letter portrays the paladin merely as a man in love but still characterised by a strong personality, since he explicitly states his identity twice: 'E perché chiar vi sia, chi in questo foglio | scrive l'alta bellezza, e'l suo dolore, | io son Rinaldo quel, [...] | Rinaldo io son, [...] E perché son d'ogni difesa ignudo, | de la vostra beltà mi faccio scudo' (RA, 27). Confessing his powerlessness against love, Rinaldo symbolically gives up the shield and, like Bradamante, is deprived of his warrior persona. Consistently with the Ovidian tradition, the erotic rhetoric takes over the martial one.

The accusation that Angelica disdains love and the implication that she will come to regret it are themes that were developed by Ariosto's epigones. In his *Dieci canti di Sacripante* (1536), Ludovico Dolce condemns Angelica for rejecting love, albeit foretelling that she will be saved by the titular hero,<sup>161</sup> and in his *Morte di Ruggiero* Giovan Battista Pescatori (1542) portrays Angelica crying over the paladin's death, regretting too late her behaviour towards him.<sup>162</sup> As pointed out by Ulrich Leo, the afterlife of Ariosto's Angelica was connected to the theme of punishment.<sup>163</sup> However, critical interpretations of Ariosto's character are far from unequivocal. While in the Giolito and Valvassori editions attention is drawn in canto I to the opportunism of Angelica, who pretends to be courteous with Sacripante only for her own benefit, in Valgrisi, on the contrary, the fugitive heroine is praised for showing only the necessary courtesy.<sup>164</sup> Thus, Rinaldo's accusations against the Cathay princess are, at least in part, consistent with the criticism her character received in contemporary productions and comments.

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<sup>161</sup> *Dieci canti di Sacripante, [...], quai seguitano Orlando Furioso, novamente ristampati, historiati, et con ogni diligentia corretti* (Venice: Nicolò d'Aristotile, 1537). The first five canti were printed in 1535 and the first complete edition in 1536.

<sup>162</sup> The first edition was published once in 1546; the second was re-printed eight times in the Cinquecento. Giovan Battista Pescatore, *Morte di Ruggiero continuata a la materia de l'Ariosto [...]* (Venice: Comin da Trino, 1548).

<sup>163</sup> Ulrich Leo, *Angelica e i migliori plettri*, Schriften und Vorträge des Petrarca-Instituts Köln, 4 (Krefeld: Scherpe, 1953) (Krefeld: Scherpe, 1953). For a criticism of Leo's contribution and Dolce's poem I refer to Ronnie H. Terpening, *Lodovico Dolce: Renaissance Man of Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), pp. 32-48. Other insightful observations on Angelica's afterlife in Ariosto's continuators are in Guido Sacchi, *Fra Ariosto e Tasso: vicende del poema narrativo: con un'appendice di studi cinquecenteschi* (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2006).

<sup>164</sup> Giolito 1542, A3<sup>r</sup>; Valgrisi 1556, A1<sup>r</sup>; Valvassori 1566, A1<sup>r</sup>.



Unlike Rinaldo, in his letter Sacripante focusses on his lovesickness, which results from Angelica's escape, and compares his condition to suffering in hell through a series of classical references and metaphors connected to the infernal context. Sacripante writes immediately after learning that Angelica left the Christian camp: 'da poi ch'egli intese, che s'era partita per Levante'.<sup>165</sup> Ariosto's character, then, writes as someone who has been abandoned, and his letter is closer to the elegiac mode of the lament. His epistle is built on one main theme magnified and dramatised through frequent and repetitive use of classical references. Although the Saracen knight weeping for Angelica naturally brings to mind his lament in the first canto of *Orlando furioso*, which is the first lament to appear in the romance and depicts a pathetic Sacripante grieving over the presumed loss of virginity of his beloved, Sacripante's letter does not display specific references to Ariosto, and indeed his epistle is the most free-standing of the collection. Moreover, while Rinaldo's portrait of Angelica is quite conventional, the representation of Ariosto's heroine appears more ambiguous in Sacripante's epistle.

The theme and tone of the letter is established from the first stanza, which recalls traditional *topoi* such as the lover's infernal torment and the beloved's divine nature:

Se l'esser lungi, e non più grato a Dio  
e quel ch'oggi fra noi si chiama inferno,  
dove 'l dannato a se medesmo rio  
s'afflige in duol atroce, e sempiterno.  
Hor, che lontano mi ritrovo anch'io,  
e 'n odio a te idol mio caro eterno,  
con troppo acerba pena, e crudeltate,  
provo quanto là giù basso si pate.

SA, 1

Even though it is based on the traditional similarity between the beloved and God, Sacripante's representation of Angelica, defined as 'idol mio caro eterno', does not cast an entirely positive light on the Cathay princess. The immobile image of Angelica as idol of her lover seems also to have a negative side, especially taking into account the multifaceted representation of Ariosto's heroine throughout the letter. In fact, falling in love with her marks the hero's entrance to hell, causing 'pallor di morte, tema, pianto, e guai | fiera ingordigia, e van desir' (SA, 3). As the lover's suffering is compared to the infernal torments mythical creatures inflict upon the 'turba ria de le mal nate genti' (SA, 4) and his desperate thoughts persecute him like the Furies persecute their victims, the

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<sup>165</sup> Filippi, *Lettere*, E2<sup>v</sup>.

connection between love and death, which underlies all the letters, here reaches its peak. The condition of the lover is hopeless, since, even when hope sets him free, his ‘acerbi e rei pensieri’ (SA, 5) come back like the hydra regrowing its venomous heads. In this context, Angelica is transfigured into a mythical creature that torments the soul of the damned:

Di faccia bella, e di crudel natura  
 volan per l’aria di Pluton l’harpie,  
 i miseri stracciando in pena dura  
 con l’unghie loro, sì rapaci, e rie;  
 così tua dolce angelica figura  
 sotto finte sembianze humili, e pie  
 col suo crudo voler perfido, e strano  
 mi straccia, ah! lasso, tutto a brano a brano.

SA, 6

The shift in the representation of Angelica from idol to harpy ‘di faccia bella e di crudel natura’ turns her into an active agent in the torment of the poet. Moreover, since she is compared to an infernal creature due to her ‘crudo voler perfido e strano’, there is reason to doubt her celestial essence (it is only her appearance, after all, which is ‘angelica’). Furthermore, Angelica is implicitly compared to Zeus, who cast down the arrogant Titans with the thunderbolt just as Sacripante is cast down by her beautiful eyes. The poet’s desire is compared to that of Tantalus, who cannot pick the fruit he craves no matter how much he tries to reach it: Angelica’s ‘vaga beltà’ (SA, 14) escapes him while her image is impressed on his heart.

Sacripante’s infernal condition is represented as an underworld characterised by a classical landscape, including Styx, Cocytus, Lethe. Besides classical monsters of the underworld, Sacripante recalls well-known infernal inhabitants whose myths are associated with crimes towards the gods (Sisyphus, Ixion, Tityos, Tantalus) and towards family (Danaids).<sup>166</sup> Through the comparison between the lover’s ‘ingordo [...] desir’ and the ‘bramose voglie’ of Tantalus (SA, 14), the longing for the woman acquires a more negative nuance. In this hellish imagery, the lyric *topos* of the beautiful cruel mistress is refashioned in a more radical way, leading the reader to doubt Angelica’s worthiness, and Sacripante’s love for her becomes an irrational emotion worthy of condemnation.

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<sup>166</sup> In particular, all these five punishments are mentioned together in Ovid, *Met.* IV, 447-463.

Since the beneficial effects of love are mentioned only towards the conclusion, Sacripante's letter, built on the traditional interpretation of love as inescapable pain, portrays a darker side to the experience of love in comparison with Rinaldo's epistle. Rinaldo chooses to persuade Angelica by praising her beauty and virtue, while Sacripante chooses to move her by dramatically identifying the terrible torments caused by her rejection and abandonment. While Rinaldo proudly states his identity as lover and as knight and openly writes to seduce her, Sacripante only focusses on his lovesickness, so that his letter becomes a lament on a par with the female-written epistles. In other words, Sacripante's voice takes on a traditionally feminine mode, while Rinaldo does not lose his masculinity despite giving up his warrior persona.

### **3.9 Love, death, and the metamorphosis of Ariosto's characters**

The analysis of the *Lettere* has shown that his approach to *Orlando furioso* is very diverse. The relationship with Ariosto is constant but exhibited to different degrees and with different outcomes. In some cases the derivation from the *Furioso* is evident from systematic textual echoes, and in others Filippi draws inspiration from Ariosto by elaborating on his themes and narrative elements. The dialogue with Ariosto is thus continuous: Filippi invites his readers to revisit some of Ariosto's episodes or to envision new situations to be incorporated in the romance narrative. While recalling the *Furioso*, then, Filippi also invites the reader to re-read it from a new perspective. Thus, the adaptation of the characters of Ariosto's romance engenders a metamorphosis which productively puts Ariosto and Filippi in contact. This metamorphosis operates at the individual level of the epistle, as has been demonstrated, as well as at the collective level of the collection. As Brownlee has pointed out, in fact, the *Heroides* are to be read 'collectively as well as individually, that is, syntactically as well as semantically'.<sup>167</sup> The recurrent themes underlying Filippi's collection are, then, significant insofar as they underpin Filippi's adaptation and the metamorphosis of Ariosto's characters.

As a collection of epistles based on Ovid's *Heroides*, one of the features distinguishing Filippi's work is the fact that all the characters write. A few references are made, then, to the act of writing, especially at the beginning or conclusion of the letter. Within the epistolary frame, the heroines' laments often take the form of dramatic monologues, as in the case of Bradamante and Olimpia. More importantly, the heroines do not write in

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<sup>167</sup> Brownlee, p. 8.

the hope that their letters can be effective: on the contrary, they denounce their act of writing as partially cathartic in that they have the chance to give concrete expression to their feelings. Hence, Ginevra begins her writing by stating her wish to express her sorrow because ‘ben muor chi morendo esce di doglia’ (GA, 1). Olimpia explicitly acknowledges the uselessness of her letter: ‘Ma parlo ingrato a te, perché dal seno | perdendo hor io l’afflittito spirto invano; | ed ogn’altro mio ben, che più mi duole, | vo perder anco in van queste parole’ (OB,1). The free mind of the captive Isabella prompts her to write: ‘lo spirto è meco pur libero, e sciolto, [...] | e vuol che fuor di speme sperì, e scriva | per far la doglia mia forse più viva’ (IZ, 1). Fiordiligi explicitly writes only to pour her heart out in an extreme and hopeless gesture: ‘io vuò svelarti in tutto e scoprire | l’interno mio dolor per non morire’ (FB 1).

These references to the act of writing also signal a connection between writing and dying. Following the Ovidian tradition, the heroines write when their tragic destiny is, or appears, imminent. Even the immortal Alcina compares her last words to a swan song, implying the hopelessness of her condition, and writes as an abandoned woman destined to die without Ruggiero’s love. A recurrent theme in Filippi’s epistles is, in fact, the hopeless love of the heroines leading them to death. The connection between love and the death of the heroine is particularly significant. Fictionally authored by characters in love, Filippi’s epistles primarily deal with the issue of the nature of love, which, following the Petrarchan fashion, is a fleeting illusion leading to death. Love and death are two inseparable elements and the latter is represented as the natural consequence of the former. In her analysis of the Ovidian letters featuring in Giovanni Filoteo Achillini’s mythological poem *Viridario* (1513), Longhi has insightfully observed that the heroines’ epistles aim to extend the letter-writing heroine’s life span which then coincides with the writing time.<sup>168</sup> More importantly, MacCarthy has pointed out that in *Orlando furioso* ‘suicide enables the virtuous damsel to place the chain of values she is supposed to embody beyond the devastation of time and other processes of defilment’.<sup>169</sup> From this perspective, the Ovidian heroines with their tragic destinies provided extremely suitable models for reinforcing the exemplarity of Ariosto’s characters, and, significantly, Filippi’s heroines often attempt or mention suicide. Thus, as they become a catalogue of examples equated with those offered by Ovid in the *Heroides*, Filippi’s adaptation of Ariosto’s characters has ideological consequences.

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<sup>168</sup> Longhi, ‘Lettere a Ippolito e Teseo’, p. 391; on Achillini’s use of the epistles see in particular pp. 385-388.

<sup>169</sup> Mac Carthy, p. 104.

As the heroines express their own perspectives, moreover, they address the recurrent themes of hope, destiny and memory. They are hopeless or blame hope for deceiving them against the reality of their situation. Thus, Bradamante accuses the ‘falsa speme’ (BR, 10) of leading to her death while other heroines, like Olimpia and Fiodiligi, openly acknowledge their hopelessness. The heroines write as victims of an inescapable fate: Ginevra laments her ‘sinistro fato’ (GA, 6), which kept her apart from Ariodante, and Isabella her ‘fortuna crudel’ (IZ, 10), which saved her from drowning only for her to be abducted by pirates. In Fiordiligi’s letter ominous prefigurations of Brandimarte’s destiny are significant components. Contrasted with their ordeal is the strength of their love. The heroines restate the stoic acceptance of their fate, their fortitude and endurance; the conclusion of the letters usually depicts the abandoned woman on the verge of dying, emphasising the stability of her love in contrast with the precariousness of her situation. The heroines’ memories of past hopes and happiness are contrasted with their present conditions and their future destinies. In contrast with her captivity, Isabella recalls her past expectations of happiness with Zerbino. Alcina evokes the happy moments spent with Ruggiero as memories belonging to the past in opposition to a gloomy, lonely present. Thus, Ariosto’s characters reclaim a space for self-expression while their potential ambiguity is neutralised or removed. This is particularly evident in Bradamante’s epistle, where Filippi rewrites and refashions a lament in which Bradamante’s elegiac persona contrasts with her identity as woman-warrior, which is then erased in the letter.

The male-authored letters are very different. Since the male heroes do not write within the context of an inevitable tragic fate, they write from a different perspective. Rinaldo’s stated purpose is to show Angelica the error of her conduct. Sacripante writes to beg for Angelica’s love to save him. Rodomonte’s letter stands out, since the Saracen knight explicitly wishes to express his scorn and to dishonour Doralice, thus turning the epistle into a weapon against both Doralice and women in general. As a result, the male heroes address different issues. Sacripante’s letter elaborates on the traditional theme of love sickness and Rinaldo’s on the beauty of the beloved. Rodomonte is not a love-sick hero but a scorned lover: writing to express his bitterness against Doralice and the female gender, he denounces the fallacy of love, which is an irrational sentiment causing chaos and leading men to shameful actions. While love and abandonment mark the heroines’ deaths, the abandoned hero writes choosing themes and arguments in order to either seduce or defame.

Thus, Filippi's *Lettere*, like Ovid's *Heroides*, provide a catalogue of cases exploring the phenomenology of love. The letters of Isabella and Fiordispina, which are consecutive in the collection, are both written by a captive woman but extremely different in terms of structure, themes, and approach to Ariosto. The epistles of Rinaldo and Sacripante, also sequential in the collection, can be viewed as variations on a main theme, the paladins' unrequited love for Angelica. Rodomonte's misogynistic letter, which is the last of the collection, is preceded by the epistle of the exemplary Fiordiligi. The world of Filippi's characters is a gloomy one where fate has destined the heroines to a tragic ending and the heroes to remain unsatisfied. Filippi, then, plays with the stories as developed in *Orlando furioso*, where heroines like Bradamante and Olimpia eventually have their happy ending. Filippi's adaptation is underpinned by the moralising and allegorical readings of both Ariosto and Ovid and results in the loss of the ambiguities and contradictions of Ariosto's characters. By becoming one-dimensional, they become epitomes of the values the author attaches to them: as these values are based on opposites of positivity and negativity, the characters are also charged with positive or negative moral worth.

Familiar with *Orlando furioso*, the reader of the time was able to enjoy Filippi's references and twists. Filippi restates Ariosto's romance while simultaneously manipulating it: he echoes *Orlando furioso* while transforming its characters and episodes. As pointed out by Sanders, offering a revised viewpoint from the original implies offering commentary on the source.<sup>170</sup> By expressing the heroines' hypothetical motivation and voicing what is silenced in the text, Filippi offers a commentary on the *Furioso*, whose characters are proposed to the reader as *exempla*. Moreover, as he acts as Ovid for Ariosto by giving voice to abandoned heroines, Filippi implicitly sanctifies the *Furioso* as a classic on a par with the works that inspired the Roman poet, including especially the *Aeneid*, thus reinforcing the affiliation of Ariosto's romance with Virgil's epic. Thus, *Orlando furioso* is legitimised at the same time as it is dislodged from its romance roots and disseminated in the literary domains of elegiac epistolary poetry and catalogues of moralising *exempla*. Filippi's work marks a step further from the literary *divertissement* of *lamenti* and *trasmutazioni* towards the ideological transposition of Ariosto's poem into a new cultural domain. Part Three will, then, examine the adaptation of Ariosto's romance to an alien cultural domain in Cristoforo Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali*, a religious rewriting of *Orlando furioso*.

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<sup>170</sup> Sanders, p. 23.

# PART THREE: SPIRITUALISING

## *ORLANDO FURIOSO*

### 4. THE COUNTER-REFORMATION AND LITERARY CLASSICS: PROHIBITION, EXPURGATION, SPIRITUALISATION AND THE CRITICISM OF CHIVALRIC ROMANCES

#### 4.1 After the Council of Trent

The *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali* by Cristoforo Scanello, published in Naples in 1593,<sup>171</sup> transposes Ariosto's poem from its romance worldview into the new domain of religious poetry. Compared with Filippi's adaptation, Scanello's recasting is at the same time more limited and more extensive. While he only rewrites canto I of the *Furioso*, Scanello entirely relocates Ariosto's text from one cultural domain to another altogether. As in Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso*, in Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto* the derivation from the *Furioso* is explicit. However, in the religious rewriting of the romance its presence is more disguised and the ideological shift is more pronounced. As Scanello's work is a manifestation of the literary fashion of recasting classics into religious works, two issues will be considered in this chapter: the historical context and the literary background of this practice. The first question to be addressed concerns particularly the new religious sensitivity which developed throughout the Cinquecento and the influence the Church exerted over the Italian cultural sphere at the time of the Inquisition and the Council of Trent.

This Part will then begin by addressing issues of censorship, expurgation and literary criticism, especially drawing on the studies of Gigliola Fragnito, Ugo Rozzo and Jennifer Helm. Following on from that, particular attention will be given to the fashion of religious rewritings of canonical vernacular works, which started as early as 1536, with Girolamo Malipiero's *Petrarca spirituale*.<sup>172</sup> These forms of rewritings have received scant but relevant critical attention, which will be re-evaluated in relation to the dynamics of permanence and rejection that my analysis aims to bring to light. I will then reconstruct and explore the criticism towards the *Furioso* from a religious point of view before

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<sup>171</sup> Cristoforo Scanello, *Primo Canto dell'Ariosto. Tradotto in rime spirituali. Poste in luce per Christoforo Scannello detto il Cieco da Forlì* (Naples: Carlino and Pace, 1593).

<sup>172</sup> Girolamo Malipiero, *Il Petrarca spirituale* (Venice: Marcolini, 1536).

discussing its presence, and particularly the presence of its themes and characters, in the field of religious rewritings. As it was re-proposed for print in Naples by Scanello, a travelling *cantimbanco*, the *Primo canto* provides significant evidence of the dissemination of Ariosto's romance in a context culturally defined by the establishment of ideologies strongly opposed to Ariosto's poetics. Before focussing on the *Primo canto*, then, I will discuss Scanello's role in the dissemination of literary works. Ultimately, my analysis of Scanello's work will show that, although the *Furioso* is rewritten from a critical standpoint, ideologically motivated by the rejection of Ariosto's romance worldview, Scanello in fact restates and reinstates *Orlando furioso* by constantly evoking Ariosto. The considerations of the practice of religious rewriting of literary classics and the related adaptation and dissemination of *Orlando furioso* offered in this Part are also preliminary to my analysis of another religious rewriting of the romance, Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale*, which is discussed at length in Part Five.

The third and final version of Ariosto's romance was published in 1532, over a decade before the beginning of the Council of Trent and the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. Promulgated by Pope Pius IV in 1564, the Tridentine Index followed another list of prohibited books, the Pauline Index of 1559, which was particularly strict in terms of literary productions. In the Index of 1559 the works of many well-established authors, both antecedent and contemporary to the Index, were deemed unorthodox and dangerous to Catholic morals: among the most famous prohibited works were Dante's *Monarchia*, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Machiavelli's *opera omnia*. As Gigliola Fragnito as shown, beside criticism for its excessive strictness, the Pauline Index encountered numerous obstacles with regard to its application, mostly due to the inadequacy of the peripheral structures required for such an enterprise.<sup>173</sup> Less than a decade after the publication of the Tridentine Index, in 1571 the Congregation of the Index was founded with the purpose of keeping the list of prohibited books updated and, in 1596, a new updated version of the Index was published under Pope Clement VIII (the Clementine Index) with the general aim of 'deleting everything that offended Christian morals'.<sup>174</sup>

The significance of its impact in terms of literary culture has been the object of much scholarly research, especially after the 1998 opening of the Vatican Archives that store the files of the Congregation of the Index. Focussing on the relationship between the

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<sup>173</sup> Gigliola Fragnito, 'Expurgatory policy of the Church and the works of Gasparo Contarini', in *Heresy, Culture and Religion in Early Modern Italy: Contexts and Contestations*, ed. by Ronald K. Delph, Michelle M. Fontaine, John Jeffries Martin (Kirkville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2006), pp. 193-207 (p. 195).

<sup>174</sup> Fragnito, 'Expurgatory policy', p. 198.



various Indices and literary production, Ugo Rozzo has provided a well-researched overview of how complex and often paradoxical this relationship was.<sup>175</sup> On the other hand, Fragnito has discussed the structures and mechanisms of the censorship machine and shown how its ineffectiveness nonetheless had ‘devastating effects’ in terms of culture and religion.<sup>176</sup> More importantly, putting together documents from the recently-opened Vatican Archives, Jennifer Helm’s recent contribution has tackled the issue of the relationship between poetry and censorship from a broader perspective. Exploring the impact of censorship on poetic creation and reception, Helm argues that censorship contributed to the transformation and development of literary genres and modes of writing, ultimately influencing the creative process. Focussing on vernacular poetry and its main themes (love, laughter, the marvelous), Helm deals also with the censorship of Ariosto’s romance within a broad thematic framework.<sup>177</sup> These studies reflect the cultural magnitude of the Index, which therefore also had a significant impact upon the reception, dissemination, and adaptation of Ariosto’s romance.

As anticipated in the Introduction, besides prohibition, expurgation was another and subtler means the Catholic Church adopted in order to extend its cultural control over intellectual production and the publishing industry. The practice of expurgation rests on the idea that a work is tarnished by errors, elements which were perceived as contrasting with Catholic morals and tenets as defined by the Council of Trent. Such errors made the work immoral and therefore dangerous as a vehicle of heretical or unorthodox notions that could lead its readers astray: impure in its current state, the work required purification before being made accessible to the Catholic reader. Thus, unlike prohibition, expurgation did not condemn an entire work to not being printed or sold, but it did condemn it to manipulation and rewriting. The manipulation of a literary work in need of expurgation and the exploitation of its success and popularity are the mechanisms grounding the very concept of expurgation.

As expurgation was a more complex operation than simple prohibition, the censors soon became aware of the difficulties it entailed, particularly in terms of the procedure and criteria of amendment; consequently, the years between 1559 and 1596 were distinguished by the proliferation of texts dealing with the issue of expurgation.<sup>178</sup> As pointed out by Fragnito, the expurgation practice was formalised in the Index of 1564, which established that bishops and inquisitors were in charge of such operations.

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<sup>175</sup> Ugo Rozzo, *La letteratura italiana negli Indici del Cinquecento* (Udine: Forum, 2005).

<sup>176</sup> Fragnito, ‘Expurgatory policy...’, p. 202.

<sup>177</sup> Jennifer Helm, *Poetry and Censorship in Counter-Reformation Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

<sup>178</sup> Rozzo, p. 75.

However, even after the founding of the Congregation of the Index in 1571, the lack of clear instructions regarding expurgation in the Index made the practice less successful than originally intended.<sup>179</sup> The following Index of 1596 established a new rule based on a distinction between books by ancient or modern Catholic authors: according to this new rule, books published before 1515 did not require emendation. Since works published after 1515 were to be corrected, the Clementine Index included a specific and more detailed guide for expurgation.<sup>180</sup>

Besides a papal bull and a preface, the Tridentine Index was introduced by a list of ten *regulae*, which were included also in the Index of 1596.<sup>181</sup> These *regulae* provided general introductory guidelines for the Index as well as for expurgation. Among the most important rules are *regula VII* and *regula IX*: the former deals with works containing obscene and lascivious material, and the latter deals with superstition, magic, and freedom of the will. Drawing attention to the paratext of the Index, Helm has examined at length both these *regulae* and their significance for Italian poetry, discussing the broad scope and impact of Rule VII in particular.<sup>182</sup> This *regula* established that works dealing with ‘res lascivas, seu obscoenas’ in any way are to be prohibited and their possessors punished. However, this did not apply to classical works, which were permitted for linguistic reasons (‘propter sermonis elegantia’)<sup>183</sup> but were not to be read to young boys. As noted by Helm, not only did this *regula* govern the regulation of the reception of classical authors, who were valued for language and style, but also the concept of the obscene and lascivious, which went beyond simply referring to erotic material to include the realm of morality.<sup>184</sup> Thus, the general rules set out in the Tridentine Index had a significant and extensive impact on literary culture and production, including especially the works of professional expurgators and individual rewriters.

As mentioned in the Introduction, Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, a well-established literary and linguistic model for Italian prose writing, was rewritten three times. While Boccaccio’s short stories were condemned in the 1559 Index because of the unacceptable

<sup>179</sup> Fragnito, ‘Expurgatory policy’, pp. 196-198.

<sup>180</sup> On the *instructio* see Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 54-55. For the *Indices* of 1559, 1564 and 1596 I refer to *Index des livres interdits*, ed. by Jesus Martinez de Bujanda, 11 vols (Sherbrooke, Québec: Éditions de l’Université de Sherbrooke; Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1985-1994), VIII: *Index de Rome, 1559, 1564. Les premiers index romains et l’index du Concile de Trente*; IX: *Index de Rome, 1596. Avec étude des index de Parme, 1580, Munich, 1583 et de Rome 1590, 1593*. Heretofore it will be referred to as *ILI*.

<sup>181</sup> For the *regulae* see *ILI*, ed. by De Bujanda, VIII, pp. 813-822; IX, pp. 920-924.

<sup>182</sup> Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 94-95, 109, 138-144.

<sup>183</sup> *ILI*, ed. by De Bujanda, VIII, p. 817.

<sup>184</sup> Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 94-95, 141.

errors affecting their printed editions,<sup>185</sup> in the more moderate Tridentine Index they were prohibited ‘quamdiu expurgatae’.<sup>186</sup> Consequently, in 1570 a group of Florentine scholars led by Vincenzo Borghini was charged with the burdensome task of expurgating the *Decameron*. Disregarded both by readership and inquisitors, albeit for different reasons, this first edition of the revised *Decameron* (1573) was unsuccessful. As a result, a new edition, revised and edited by Lionardo Salviati, was published in 1582. Unlike the previous one, this later version was an editorial success: six editions were printed between 1582 and 1599. Finally, the third expurgated version, work of Luigi Groto, was printed posthumously in 1588 and authorised by the Venetian Inquisition.<sup>187</sup>

Taking into account the works of Borghini and Salviati, Paolo Maria Gilberto Maino has observed that the main issues which were particularly sensitive for the censorial authorities concerned the representation of the Church and matters of faith as well as the treatment of erotic and sexual elements.<sup>188</sup> Thus, in the name of doctrinal orthodoxy Boccaccio’s work underwent extensive changes. Moreover, the editorial success of Salviati’s enterprise shows that a wide readership met the revision of a renowned work such as the *Decameron* favourably. The case of the *Decameron* is a vivid example of the ambiguous position of the Church towards literary classics, which were criticised as dangerous and yet accepted, and in fact re-proposed, as canonical.

## 4.2 Spiritualising literary classics

Together with prohibition, expurgation was a means of cultural control and a development following the institution of the Index. Yet, well before the Counter-Reformation the literary practice of rewriting vernacular classics in a religious fashion had been put forward by Girolamo Malipiero in the 1530s. In the *Petrarca spirituale*, published in Venice in 1536, Malipiero revises and rewrites Petrarch’s *Canzoniere*, which

<sup>185</sup> ‘Boccatij Decades, feu Novellae centum, quae hactenus cum intollerabilibus erroribus ipressae funt, et quae in posterum cum eisdem erroribus imprimentur’ (*ILI*, ed. by De Bujanda, VIII, p. 757).

<sup>186</sup> *ILI*, ed. by De Bujanda, VIII, p. 827.

<sup>187</sup> Giovanni Boccaccio, *Il Decameron di messer Giovanni Boccacci cittadino fiorentino. Ricorretto in Roma, et emendato secondo l’ordine del sacro Conc. di Trento [...]* (Florence: Giunti, 1573); *Il Decameron di messer Giovanni Boccacci, cittadin fiorentino, di nuovo ristampato, e riscontrato in Firenze con testi antichi, et alla sua vera lezione ridotto dal cavalier Lionardo Salviati [...]*, ed. by Leonardo Salviati and others (Venice: Giunti, 1582); *Il Decamerone di messer Giovanni Boccaccio cittadin fiorentino. Di nuovo riformato da m. Luigi Groto cieco d’Adria [...]*, ed. by Luigi Groto (Venice: Zoppini and Farri, 1588).

<sup>188</sup> Paolo Maria Gilberto Maino, ‘Le correzioni “di cortesia” nelle rassettature fiorentine del *Decameron*’, in *Leggere, interpretare, riscrivere. Poeti, filologi, traduttori alla prova del Decameron*, Atti del VII seminario di Letteratura italiana, Helsinki, 29 ottobre 2013, ed. by Enrico Garavelli (Helsinki: Publicationes romanes de l’Université de Helsinki, 2014), pp. 33-48. On the expurgations of the *Decameron* see also Giuseppe Chiecchi and Luciano Troisio, *Il ‘Decameron’ sequestrato: le tre edizioni censurate nel Cinquecento* (Milan: Unicopli, 1984).

is re-proposed to its readers as cleansed of its errors. The Venetian Malipiero was a Franciscan friar, appreciated by Venetian intellectuals for his knowledge of theology as well as his eloquence. Before the *Petrarca spirituale*, he dedicated a biography of Petrarch to Pope Clement VII.<sup>189</sup> The religious recasting of Petrarch's poetry was his most successful work.

Malipiero's work is a comprehensive rewriting of Petrarch's love lyrics as religious poems. The poems are introduced by a dialogue between Malipiero and Petrarch's ghost, which ideologically frames Malipiero's operation and helps to clarify his literary strategy. During a visit to Petrarch's tomb in Arquà, Malipiero is approached by the ghost of the poet. The ghost informs Malipiero that he is condemned in this world until he retracts his love lyrics and that his verse should not be interpreted allegorically, since the object of his love was indeed 'folle, vano et caduco'.<sup>190</sup> This fiction, therefore, implies not only that the text is morally corrupt and needs to be purified, but also that the rewritten version is the only admissible one, as it is the original author himself who refuted his initial text. Moreover, the ghost explains that Petrarch's error did not lie only in the poetic celebration of his 'insana concupiscenza'<sup>191</sup> but was also due to the fact that he set a negative example for posterity: modern poets, notes the fictional Malipiero, take style and subject from his verse, and read and study it more than they do the Gospels. Thus, Malipiero's criticism is directed in particular towards contemporary poets, who only write of vain and licentious subjects.

Aptly defined by Rozzo as the original model for all subsequent expurgations,<sup>192</sup> the *Petrarca spirituale* aims to re-establish the reading of Petrarch's poetry in religious terms. In his analysis of Malipiero's work, Amedeo Quondam has shown through thorough scrutiny of the intertextuality at play between Malipiero's work and Petrarch's text how the latter is deconstructed and reworked through the radicalization of its thematic elements.<sup>193</sup> Laura is eliminated and replaced with the Virgin Mary; love is either sinful profane love or redeeming divine love, and martyrs are the true heroes. Thus, in what can be viewed as a challenge to Bembo's classicism, as pointed out by Quondam,<sup>194</sup> Malipiero

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<sup>189</sup> Girolamo Malipiero, *Seraphicae in divi Francisci vitam* (Venice: Tacuino, 1531); for Malipiero's biography and works see Paolo Zaja, 'Malipiero, Girolamo', in *DBI*, XLVIII (2007), pp. 212- 215.

<sup>190</sup> Malipiero, *Il Petrarca spirituale*, A2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>191</sup> Malipiero, *Il Petrarca spirituale*, A3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>192</sup> Rozzo, p. 88.

<sup>193</sup> Amedeo Quondam, *Il naso di Laura: lingua e poesia lirica nella tradizione del classicismo* (Modena: Panini 1991), p. 206. Quondam dedicates an extensive chapter to Malipiero's work ('Riscrittura, citazione, parodia. Il *Petrarca spirituale* di Girolamo Malipiero', pp. 203-262) first publ. in *Studi e problemi di critica testuale*, 17 (1978), 77-125.

<sup>194</sup> Quondam, *Il naso di Laura*, pp. 220, 250.

introduces religious matters into a lyric discourse, and significantly into the predominant model of Italian lyric poetry.

The significance of Malipiero's comprehensive and complex revision of the model is directly related to the constant presence of the source text in the mind of the reader. Unlike Petrarch, Malipiero distinguishes the poems of the *canzoniere* according to metrical forms: the *Petrarca spirituale* is divided into two sections, one for sonnets and one for canzoni, and the poems are numbered consecutively in each section. Thus, the numbering of Petrarch's poems does not coincide with Malipiero's. His rewriting nonetheless rests upon a continuous comparison with the model both in terms of themes and poetic choices. Thus, for instance, Malipiero's sonnet XI<sup>195</sup> is a rewriting of Rvf XII:

<i>Se la mia vita da l'aspro tormento</i> si può tanto schermire, et dagli <i>affanni</i> , ch' i' veggia per virtù de gli ultimi <i>anni</i> , donna, de' be' vostr' occhi il lume <i>spento</i> ,	<i>Se la mia vita da l'aspro tormento</i> che mi da il senso ogni hor con tanti <i>affanni</i> , che levi prego hormai in quest' ultim' <i>anni</i> ,
e i cape' d'oro fin farsi d' <i>argento</i> , et lassar le ghirlande e i verdi <i>panni</i> , e 'l viso scolorir che ne' miei <i>danni</i> , a lamentar mi fa pauroso et <i>lento</i> :	anzi ch'ogni tuo lume in me sia <i>spento</i> , già non ti cheggio, o Dio; oro né <i>argento</i> non il vestir di delicati <i>panni</i> , ma che per dar ristoro a gli miei <i>danni</i> non sia il soccorso tuo pigro et <i>lento</i>
pur mi darà tanta baldanza <i>Amore</i> ch' i' vi scoprirò de' mei <i>martiri</i> qua' sono stati gli anni, e i giorni et l' <i>ore</i> ;	ben sopra ogni altro don, desio l' <i>amore</i> , che fè già molti star ne i gran <i>martiri</i> lieti e costanti gli anni, i mesi, et l' <i>hore</i> .
et se 'l tempo è contrario ai be' <i>desiri</i> , non fia ch' almen non giunga al mio <i>dolore</i>	Hor vedi dunque tutti i miei <i>desiri</i> drizzati a te, Signor: tu il van <i>dolore</i> scaccia, et soccorri al cor, pien di <i>sospiri</i> .
alcun soccorso di tardi <i>sospiri</i> .	
Rvf XII <sup>1</sup>	Ps XI

Within the boundaries of an intertextual structure which echoes only Petrarch's incipit and rhyme scheme, the sonnet is rewritten within a completely new ideological frame of reference: Petrarch is at the same time explicitly evoked and entirely revisited. Notably, Quondam has highlighted that the incipits of poems are particularly relevant due to their recognisability and function as titles.<sup>196</sup> Significantly, then, Malipiero's strategy generally lies in reducing quotations of Petrarch to first verses and end rhymes, while the extent of references to Petrarch's text outside this scheme can vary greatly from one poem to

<sup>195</sup> Malipiero, *Petrarcha spirituale*, C3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>196</sup> Quondam, *Il naso di Laura*, pp. 227-229.

another. This recalling of end rhymes in particular also characterizes Scanello's *Primo canto*, as will be seen.

While expurgation as a practice was acknowledged and regulated by religious authorities, following in Malipiero's footsteps independent individuals would sometimes themselves take on the mission of revising and correcting works which they perceived as not representing acceptable religious morals. Such works were usually popular and well-known literary classics that were not officially prohibited but whose canonical and exemplary status made them of paramount importance within the Catholic design of comprehensive cultural dominion. With regard to the Church's censorship, Giorgio Caravale has pointed out that it was the whole field of "morality" that, well beyond the confines of "superstitio", became the object of a project whose purposes were essentially cultural rather than censorial and whose aim was to control every aspect of the life of the faithful':<sup>197</sup> the practice of religious rewriting of literary classics was then a separate but related manifestation of the Church's policy of cultural control.

Malipiero's rewriting strategy was crucial as it set the model for the religious rewritings that followed later in the century, including those of *Orlando furioso* by Giulio Cesare Croce (1550-1609), Cristoforo Scanello and Vincenzo Marino.<sup>198</sup> While all these authors followed in the footsteps of Malipiero, they lived and worked in the Post-Tridentine late Cinquecento, in a period when religious literature encompassed a literature of conversion, that is, a literature based on the conversion of profane literary structures into religious ones.<sup>199</sup> Croce, Scanello, and Marino, therefore, approached their target text in different ways and with very different aims. Taking into account the differences between the original model for religious rewritings and subsequent works of similar nature, however, can help to shed light not only on the development of this kind of rewritings but also on the way *Orlando furioso* was read, deconstructed and reassembled by its revisers. As we will see, some of these rewritings make explicit reference to the *Petrarca spirituale*.

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<sup>197</sup> Giorgio Caravale, *Forbidden Prayer: Church Censorship and Devotional Literature in Renaissance Italy* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), p. 76.

<sup>198</sup> Scanello, *Primo canto dell'Ariosto...*; Giulio Cesare Croce, *Rime compassionevoli, pietose, e divote sopra la passione, morte, e resurrezione del nostro Signore Giesù Cristo. Composte con bell'artificio da Giulio Cesare Croce bolognese, ad imitazione del primo canto dell'Ariosto* (Florence: [n. pub.], [after 1575]). Vincenzo Marino, *Furioso spirituale distinto in tre libri con i cinque suoi canti al fine. Composto dal Padre Vincenzo Marino prete solitario della città di Messina* (Messina: Brea, 1596). Due to the paucity of biographical data, the dates of birth and death of Scanello and Vincenzo Marino are unknown or uncertain.

<sup>199</sup> For the definition of 'literature of conversion' see the Introduction.

A religious rewriting of Boccaccio's *novelle* significantly entitled *Decamerone spirituale* was published in Venice by Varisco in 1594, over a decade after the expurgated edition of 1582.<sup>200</sup> Little is known about the author, Francesco Dionigi, who appears to have been a cleric from the town of Fano in central Italy.<sup>201</sup> Like Malipiero's work, his rewriting of Boccaccio's masterpiece is the product of an individual undertaking. His derivation from Malipiero is explicit from the title *Decamerone spirituale, cioè le dieci spirituali giornate*, which clearly evokes the *Petrarca spirituale*. Boccaccio's narrative short stories thus became 'cento famigliari ragionamenti detti in diece dì da dieci divoti giovani sopra molte nobili materie spirituali':<sup>202</sup> religious theoretical discussions replace Boccaccio's 'favole, lascivie, et cose mondane'.<sup>203</sup> As noted by Andrea Torre, Dionigi maintains Boccaccio's frame and the concept of philosophical discussions as cathartic in dismal times, but presents the reading of religious texts and spiritual reflections as the cure to a universal social and moral disorder.<sup>204</sup> Dionigi's revision of the *Decameron* is thus a complete transposition of the text from its original literary context to another cultural domain in the footsteps of Malipiero's work.

The extent of Dionigi's manipulation of Boccaccio is evident from the beginning. The role of women, prominent in the *Decameron* as the collection of *novelle* was expressly dedicated to them and they feature among the narrators of the stories, is completely revised by Dionigi. In the preface to his *novelle*, Boccaccio explains that he writes out of gratitude to women for all the solace they gave him through pleasant conversations when he was suffering for love and therefore he dedicates his work as a solace to them, as they are most in need of it. Compared to men, women are more prone to love and are furthermore more likely to suffer from heartache because of the lack of distractions available to them. Dionigi reprises Boccaccio's concept of a work beneficial for women but he does so from a moralistic and didactic perspective. His purpose is to amend 'il difetto della debolezza, e del mal uso nelle donne'.<sup>205</sup> Pious women will learn, among many useful things, to avoid 'il dannoso difetto dell'otio, il quale è di molti mali cagione

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<sup>200</sup> Francesco Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale* (Venice: Varisco, 1594). The *Decamerone spirituale* was published by the sons and heirs of Giovanni Varisco, who also published Filippi's *Lettere sopra il Furioso* in 1584.

<sup>201</sup> Besides the *Decamerone spirituale*, his other works are: Francesco Dionigi da Fano, *Amor cortese. Comedia nova pastorale [...]* (Fano: Moscardi, 1570); (*Devota rappresentatione de i martirii di santa Christina vergine, e martire di Giesù Christo* (Fano: Farri, 1592); (*Historia della vita del glorioso s. Paterniano vescovo, e protettore della città di Fano [...]* (Fano: Farri, 1591). The *Decameron spirituale* is his only work that was published in Venice.

<sup>202</sup> Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale*, a1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>203</sup> Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale*, a5<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>204</sup> Andrea Torre, 'Il silenzio di Boccaccio. Note su una controparodia di fine Cinquecento', *Levia Gravia*, 15-16 (2013-2014), 515-530 (pp. 516-519).

<sup>205</sup> Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale*, A1<sup>v</sup>.

bene spesso, et di ruine'.<sup>206</sup> Dionigi concludes that female readers will be provided with advice on how both to avoid evil and enact good, as his endeavour comes from God's grace. In line with such pedagogic aims, whereas in Boccaccio seven out of ten narrators are women, the group of narrators of the *Decamerone spirituale* does not include any female members.

The rewritings of Malipiero and Dionigi exemplify how female figures played a key role in the recasting of literary classics in religious terms. The condemnation of texts with lascivious elements made the female presence in literary works highly problematic and contributed to its revision and censorship. Female figures were associated with the erotic sphere and therefore subject to significant censure, alteration or removal. In Malipiero's early work the main female character is already completely effaced, as Laura is altogether removed and substituted by generic references to the Virgin, the female symbol of sacred love. Over fifty years later, in Dionigi's work women are described as affected by a moral weakness which needs to be amended and their role as narrators is completely censored, very likely because of such weakness. Albeit in different contexts, both Malipiero and Dionigi confront the two main models for Italian literature in the sixteenth century and both tackle the issue of female presence in radical terms. As a result of the intensification of Catholic propaganda and censorship, the problematic presence of women in literary works was one of the main concerns for authors who wished to align earlier works with the tenets of Reformed Catholicism. This is particularly true for those that rewrote *Orlando furioso* due to the prominence of female characters and the erotic themes that characterise Ariosto's romance.

#### **4.3 The Counter-Reformation attitude towards chivalric literature and *Orlando furioso* in particular**

While Boccaccio's *Decameron* was officially revised and expurgated, the position of the Church towards *Orlando furioso*, and towards romances more generally, was more complex. Considering the significant efforts of the Church toward a universal control of culture, popular and widespread chivalric literature, including *Orlando furioso*, could not elude the attention of critics and censors. Ariosto's romance, in which Christians and non-Christians share a similar chivalric code, clearly seemed to belong to a different period, when the radicalisation of religious conflicts had not yet escalated to utter incompatibility.

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<sup>206</sup> Dionigi, *Decamerone spirituale*, A1<sup>v</sup>.



The biography of Ignatius of Loyola includes an episode which vividly exemplifies how chivalric literature and culture were considered as very distant from, if not completely incompatible with, the new religious sensitivity. In his early years, the founder of the Society of Jesus was a great enthusiast of chivalric tales until a fateful event. In 1521, during a battle at Pamplona, the Spanish knight Ignatius was severely injured; during his long recovery, he had no access to his favourite romances but only to religious texts, specifically a work on the life of Christ and one on the lives of Saints. These religious readings made such an impression on him as to slowly dispel all wordly desires from his soul, prompting a deep spiritual conversion. Eventually, the desire to repent his previous life and to follow in the footsteps of the moral examples set by the Saints' lives resulted in the complete rejection of his past lifestyle.

The conversion of Saint Ignatius is described in the *Racconto del pellegrino*, the autobiography he dictated to a disciple in his late years (1553-1555).<sup>207</sup> Even taking into account its rhetorical and self-fashioning nature, the representation of the conversion of Ignatius as a passage from a mundane and frivolous life characterised by chivalric ideals to one of penance and spiritual meditation marked by an absolute repudiation of worldly and carnal desires is indicative of how traditional chivalric values were perceived as anachronistic and incompatible with the new Catholic sensitivity. From this perspective, it is noteworthy that the Society of Jesus soon became one of the most important bodies to advance and enforce the tenets of Reformed Catholicism.

Although never prohibited in the Indices of 1559, 1564 and 1597, *Orlando furioso* was not immune to the criticism deriving from the new religious sentiment which had brought Ignatius of Loyola to abandon his chivalric ideals as sinful. Ariosto's romance was in fact criticised and devalued by religious authorities and, as a popular work that had achieved canonical status, it was also subject to manipulation and rewriting. Indeed, Ariosto's representation of magic, religious characters, and enamoured Christian knights driven by their profane desire for a woman could easily be considered contrary to Christian principles and morals and detrimental to the reader, and therefore worthy of prohibition or emendation. Among the reasons why *Orlando furioso* was never prohibited was perhaps the fact that it was rendered harmless by its nature as *favola*, a fictional fable,

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<sup>207</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *A Pilgrim's Journey: the Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola*, ed. and trans. by Joseph N. Tylenda (Collegeville: Michael Glazier Book, 1991), pp. 7-19. Ignatius's autobiography circulated manuscript until it was published in 1904 in *Monumenta ignatiana. Scripta de santo Ignatio de Loyola*, 2 vols (Madrid: Lopez de l'Horno, 1904-1918), I (1904). For the editorial history of the *Racconto* see Tylenda's introduction (Loyola, *A Pilgrim's Journey*, pp. ix-xxv).

as a well-known remark in a letter of 1557 by the commissar-general of the Roman Inquisition Michele Ghislieri to the Inquisitor of Genoa clearly explains:

Di proibire Orlando, Orlandino, cento novelle et simili altri libri più presto daressemo da ridere ch'altrimente, perché simili libri non si leggono come cose a qual si habbi da credere, ma come fabule, et come si leggono anco molti libri de' gentili come Luciano, Lucretio et simili. Nondimeno se ne parlerà nella congregazione dei teologi et poi a Sua Santità et alli Reverendissimi<sup>208</sup>

Ghislieri opposes the idea of banning works such as the romances of Boiardo, Ariosto and Folengo and Boccaccio's *Decameron* as a laughable enterprise since nobody would believe in the veracity of such works any more than they would believe in that of classical authors of fables such as Lucian of Samosata and Lucretius. As highlighted by Helm, it was the reception of these works which posed the main problem.<sup>209</sup>

Significantly, the critical apparatuses accompanying the Cinquecento editions of the *Furioso* also dealt with issues connected to the fictional nature of the romance and its literary value. One edition is particularly noteworthy as it theorises the religious significance of Ariosto's poem. The Valvassori edition of 1553 is equipped with a final appendix that provides annotations and allegorical explanations of the text, in which an anonymous commentator (presumably Valvassori), referring to the poem in general terms, writes that

Allegoricamente volse intendere il poeta nostro, come l'anima humana dotata di tanta sapientia per gratia di Iesù Christo libera cade nel vizio, e del tutto si fa serva del peccato, fidata ne le proprie forze non mai può risorgere: fin che per mero dono, e bontà non degna di rilevarla, e renderle la perduta libertà agiuto celeste, figurato per Astolfo.<sup>210</sup>

Orlando's madness is allegorically interpreted as a symbol for sin and, accordingly, Astolfo's role in curing Orlando exemplifies divine aid. In Valvassori's letter to the readers, also included in the edition of 1566, the reading of profane works, and especially poetry, is presented as preliminary to the reading of the more obscure sacred material. Heroic poems, argues Valvassori, provide examples of good rulers and their virtues, such as justice and benevolence, since in the works of poets it is possible to uncover moral lessons and examples of virtue:

Ma, sì come gli alberi fruttiferi spargono tuttavia le foglie d'intorno a i rami; così questi nostri favolosi teologi ragionano della virtù, et di Dio ravigliandoli sempre nel velo di

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<sup>208</sup> This passage is quoted in Jennifer Helm, 'Literary Censorship: the Case of the *Orlando Furioso*', *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica*, [n. vol.] 1 (2012), 193-214 (p.193); and Vittorio Frajese, *Nascita dell'Indice: la censura ecclesiastica dal Rinascimento alla Controriforma* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2006), pp. 77-78.

<sup>209</sup> Helm, 'Literary Censorship', p. 193.

<sup>210</sup> Valvassori 1553, Aa2<sup>r</sup>.

varie fintioni. Et sì come da i fiori niuna cosa gli altri prendono eccetto l'odore; ma l'api ne fanno trar' il mele ancora, noi parimente penetrando oltre la vaghezza delle fintioni potremo trarne profitto grandissimo. È ben vero, che se non vi si discerne col giudicio intero, in scambio della virtù molte volte s'apprendono le passioni accecatrici dell'animo. Per la qual cosa lo studio de' poeti dee assomigliarsi al lavoro delle medesime api, le quali non colgono ugualmente tutti i frutti, né anco i colti divorano, ma quel solo gustando, che è atto a far' il mele, niente d'altro si curano. Così noi cogliendo quel solo, che ne dimostri argomento d'infallibile verità, tutto il rimanente trapasseremo.<sup>211</sup>

Valvassori combines two classical concepts significantly related to imitation and the meaning of poetry. The classical metaphor of the poets as bees who select and re-elaborate their nourishment is here applied to the reader, while the poets are assimilated to theologians who veil their message with fiction. The theory of the poet as theologian, espoused by Petrarch and Boccaccio among others, was a well-established defence of poetry and poetic lies. Moreover, as Craig Kallendorf has demonstrated when discussing Girolamo Vida's imitation of Virgil in his *Christias* in light of Virgilian commentaries, the association between poets and theologians significantly affected the reading practice of classical texts.<sup>212</sup> Valvassori thus legitimises Ariosto's poetic fiction by presenting him as one of the 'favolosi teologi' to the readership.

The task of the readers is, then, to see wisely through poetic fiction: they need to choose only those meanings which can be beneficial to the soul, like bees pick only the flowers they need in order to produce honey. Poetry can, in fact, be dangerous since it is possible for readers to assimilate negative notions if they are unable to discern the hidden moral message. Valvassori elaborates on this concept by comparing the innate danger of poetry with poison mixed with honey:

Et perché i pravi ragionamenti traviano le deboli menti, et le trasportano a pessima vita; guardiamoci con ogni diligenza, che tra la vaghezza delle loro fintioni incautamente non ammettiamo qualche male, come quelli, che occultamente inghiottiscono il veleno mescolato col mele<sup>213</sup>

Ariosto's commentator refers to the Lucretian metaphor of the vase containing a bitter medicine and covered with honey and adapts it to his critical discourse. As Maria Pia Ellero has pointed out in her insightful analysis of Valvassori's comment, he reverses the classical metaphor as honey is mixed with poison, not a medicine, at the literal level of

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<sup>211</sup> Valvassori 1566, \*7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>212</sup> Craig Kallendorf, 'From Virgil to Vida: the Poeta Theologus in Italian Renaissance Commentary', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 56 (1995), 41-62. On the *theologia poetica* of Petrarch and Boccaccio see Ronald G. Witt, 'Coluccio Salutati and the Conception of the Poeta Theologus in the Fourteenth Century', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 30 (1977), 538-563. Marco Girolamo Vida, [...] *Christiados libri sex*. (Cremona: Lodovico Britannico, 1535).

<sup>213</sup> Valvassori 1566, \*8<sup>r</sup>.

the text, and the two elements are not distinct from each other as words (honey) and allegorical meaning (medicine) are in the Lucretian metaphor.<sup>214</sup>

Ellero has highlighted the contradiction of a poem that was proposed as a model for imitation but could not be imitated without the critical guidance of the editors. However, in Valvassori's comment it is possible to identify similar mechanisms to what Valentina Prosperi has termed 'the dissimulatory code' in relation to the reception of Lucretius in the Renaissance.<sup>215</sup> According to Prosperi, while Lucretius's poem was highly problematic at the time of the Counter-Reformation because of its Epicurean philosophical grounds, the mechanisms of self-censorship displayed by its admirers, that is, the dissimulatory code, significantly fostered and favoured a wide circulation of the poem, so that the ideological rejection of Lucretius's work was accompanied by its dissemination. Notably, Tasso employed the image of the vase with medicine and honey at the beginning of his Christian epic poem (*Gl I*, 3), in which Lucretius features as one of his classical models.<sup>216</sup> By encouraging the reader to choose only the beneficial, and correct, interpretation of the text, Valvassori is distancing himself from possible criticism towards Ariosto, repudiating those aspects of the poem which have been problematic while at the same time actively participating in its circulation and dissemination.

Consistently with his apologetical approach, Valvassori makes a clear distinction between classical and modern epic, writing about Ariosto's poem that:

Né però qui si legge la moltitudine de' dei, né la lor discordia; non gli adulteri, né gli scelerati lor congiungimenti, che non senza gran rossore si potrebbero dir' eziandio degli animali irragionevoli. Ma qui un solo Dio, eterno, giusto, et immutabile con perpetua provvidenza dispone, e governa le cose umane; qui si castigano i commessi peccati; e si guidedonano i beni; qui è innalzato il legittimo precipe, e l'empio tiranno è posto al fondo; qui si vede quanto siano brevi l'umane allegrezze, et infinite le miserie. Ed in brieve qui appariscono innanzo agli occhi le virtù tanto illustri, ed in tal maniera fulminati vizi, che niuno filosofo, non che altro poeta meglio insegna o esprime quel, che per noi seguitar, e fuggir si debba in questa vita mortale.<sup>217</sup>

Compared with its antecedents, *Orlando furioso* is a superior poem because it features the Christian God instead of bickering pagan deities; as a Christian poem, moreover, Ariosto's romance provides negative as well as positive examples and has therefore a didactic value. As pointed out by Javitch, the allegories attached to each canto highlight

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<sup>214</sup> Maria Pia Ellero, 'Il lavoro delle api. La ricezione del *Furioso* nelle edizioni illustrate del secondo Cinquecento', in *Tra mille carte vive ancora*. ed. by Bolzoni, Pezzini and Rizzarelli, 2010, pp. 199-215 (p. 209).

<sup>215</sup> Valentina Prosperi, 'Lucretius in the Italian Renaissance', in *The Cambridge Companion to Lucretius*, ed. by Stuart Gillespie and Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 214-226.

<sup>216</sup> See also Prosperi's study on the reception of Lucretius and his *topos*: Valentina Prosperi, *Di soavi licor gli orli del vaso': La fortuna di Lucrezio dall'Umanesimo alla Controriforma* (Turin: Nino Aragno, 2004).

<sup>217</sup> Valvassori 1566 \*8<sup>r</sup>.

Valvassori's pessimistic interpretation of Ariosto's text with the purpose to 'convince readers that a severe morality underlies the deceptively comic surface of the text'.<sup>218</sup> Ariosto's poem was offered to its readers as exemplary in terms of morality and religion: Valvassori's introduction and critical apparatus provided guidance for readers on how to approach the text and directed its interpretation by promoting the selection of those passages and episodes which could be interpreted in an edifying Christian manner. As noted by Sberlati, Valvassori advanced a religious legitimization of the *Furioso* on the grounds of Tridentine values.<sup>219</sup> Moreover, it is noteworthy that, reduced to exemplary figures of vices and virtues through allegorisation, Ariosto's characters became more easily removable from their narrative context and adaptable to new ones, as mentioned in the Introduction.

Significantly, the reading of Ariosto in religious terms allowed for *Orlando furioso* to be indicated as a model by Teofilo Folengo in his *Umanità del figliuolo di Dio* (1533), an *ottava rima* religious poem in 10 books. In the introductory letter of the *Umanità*, Folengo writes:

Fortunato vecchio! Che 'n così grave, acconcio e ben limato stile cagioni ha porto a la molle giovenezza di ritrarsi oggimai da giochi, putte et altre infinite malfatte cose a l'onoratissimo studio delle lettere, alla grandezza de l'arme e finalmente ad ogni atto generoso di cortesia: le quali tutte cose ponno essere chiamate le fide scorte al salire più in alto e ritrovare il nostro principale oggetto, e riconosciutolo, ad altro non fermar più oltre il pensiero, che morire nel Signore e dispensatore d'eterni beni.<sup>220</sup>

Gigliola Fragnito has argued that, as Ariosto asked to be buried in the Cassinese monastery of San Benedetto, the poet had a significant relationship with the congregation; as a result, it is not surprising that the Cassinese monk Folengo read the *Furioso* as a religious itinerary to God.<sup>221</sup> For Folengo, then, Ariosto's romance was a model for the use of the *ottava rima* as well as for its subject. In Folengo's earlier *Orlandino*, Ariosto, together with Boiardo, Pulci and Francesco Cieco da Ferrara, was mentioned among the authors 'autenticati' (I, 22), in contrast with other *cantari* that are considered apocryphal; as Mario Chiesa points out in his commentary, this is the same canon indicated in Folengo's macaronic *Baldus* and in the biblical *terza rima* poem *Palermitana*.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Javitch, *Proclaiming a Classic*, p. 38.

<sup>219</sup> Sberlati, pp. 253-256.

<sup>220</sup> Folengo, *L'Umanità del figliuolo di Dio*, ed. by Simona Gatti (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2000), pp. 134-135.

<sup>221</sup> Gigliola Fragnito, 'Intorno alla "religione" dell'Ariosto: i dubbi del Bembo e le credenze ereticali del fratello Galasso', *Lettere italiane*, 44 (1992), 208-239 (p. 238).

<sup>222</sup> Teofilo Folengo, *Orlandino*, ed. by Mario Chiesa (Padova: Antenore, 1991), p. 19. The *princeps* was published by Sabbio in Venice in 1526 under the pseudonym Limerno Pitocco. For *Baldus* I refer to *Baldus*, ed. by Mario Chiesa, 2 vols (Turin: UTET, 1997).

Significantly, in fact, in the *Palermitana*, which was composed in Sicily in the 1540s and re-elaborates themes from the *Umanità*, Ariosto is mentioned together with Boiardo, Pulci and Cieco as exemplary and his poetry is said to veil religious truths:

Quanti di guerre, che 'l gran ferrarese,  
fuor che 'l suo maestro et altri duoi, vilmente  
a far coperchi agli orcioletti rese.  
Ma s'alcun forse, avendo stil decente  
d'ornarne un bel soggetto inusitato  
[...]  
del ver s'appone a celebrar lo stato,  
cacciando e i sogni lunghi e le chimere,  
come c'hanno i nostri Lui sempre adombrato

*Pal* I, 19, 46-54<sup>223</sup>

As demonstrated by Chiesa, according to Folengo poetry is vain if it does not provide relief from the grave cares of life or make transcendent truths intelligible.<sup>224</sup> Folengo's references to Ariosto show that the exemplarity of the *Furioso*, read in religious and allegorical terms, favoured its dissemination as a model for works of different genres.

In the context of tightening censorial regulations, renowned and well-established literary works could easily be considered dangerous for the Catholic reader and were therefore subject to critical investigation. Gabriele Barrio's *Pro lingua latina* offers an exemplary case of the criticism leveled at profane poets from a perspective of religious orthodoxy. The Calabrese Barrio, who is mostly known as the author of a historical work (*De antiquitate et situ Calabriae*, Rome, 1571), has also recently been recognised as the author of censorial documents of the 1570s where the works of Petrarch and Ariosto are sharply condemned, a criticism which recalls that previously put forth in the *Pro Lingua Latina* (published in 1554 and again in 1571).<sup>225</sup> The *Pro Lingua Latina libri tres*, published together with *De Aeternitate Urbis liber unus* and *De laudibus Italiae liber unus*, is an erudite treatise on languages which displays a preference for Latin. As he extends his considerations to the literary field, Barrio comments on classical and vernacular literature and strongly criticises Ariosto. Significantly, a harsh criticism of

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<sup>223</sup> A poem comprising of two books of 30 and 18 cantos respectively, the *Palermitana* was left unfinished and unpublished. I refer to Teofilo Folengo, *La palermitana*, ed. by Patrizia Sonia de Corso (Florence: Olschki, 2006).

<sup>224</sup> Mario Chiesa, 'Bugia, verità, poesia', in *Il Parnaso e la zucca. Testi e studi folenghiani*, ed. by Mario Chiesa and Simona Gatti (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1995), pp. 143-154.

<sup>225</sup> On Barrio's authorship of the 1570s censorship see Maria Antonietta Passarelli, 'Petrarca scelestus auctor in una censura (non più anonima) di Gabriele Barri (ms. Vat. Lat. 6149, ff 142r-150v)', *Critica del testo*, 6.1 (2003), 177-220, and Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, particularly pp. 305-326. Fragnito, on the other hand, mentions the author as anonymous ('"Fragnito, Gigliola, "Vanissimus et spurcissimus homo": Ariosto all'esame dei censori, in *Dalla bibliografia alla storia. Studi in onore di Ugo Rozzo*, ed. by Rudj Gorian (Udine: Forum, 2010), pp. 115-137 (p. 126).

Petrarch precedes and is associated with the equally harsh criticism of *Orlando furioso*. Barrio considers Petrarch's love poetry almost heretical because of the way Laura is depicted, as by praising Laura's corporeal beauty Petrarch champions a lustful love. The poet's greatest sin lies in the elevation of the poet's beloved to the extent that he compares Laura to the Virgin and therefore gives more praise to a mortal woman than to Mary.<sup>226</sup> With regard to Ariosto, Barrio writes that the Ferrarese poet emulated Petrarch in dealing with many lustful matters and mixing sacred matters with profane ones: 'Ludovicus Ariostus in suo Furioso, in suaque furia Petrarcham suum emulatus multa obscoena scribit, et sacra profanis miscet'.<sup>227</sup> The criticism of Ariosto is also accompanied by examples of passages where, in Barrio's opinion, the poet dangerously drifted away from Catholic orthodoxy. Barrio reprimands Ariosto because he followed in the footsteps of Petrarch, a criticism that is similar in nature to Malipiero's insofar as both traced the origin of the moral corruption of modern poetry to the negative example set by Petrarch.

Officially, Ariosto's romance came to the attention of censors in 1572, when the archbishop of Bologna Gabriele Paleotti brought it to the consideration of the Congregation of the Index, apparently without consequences.<sup>228</sup> In the 1570s, *Orlando furioso* also came under censorial scrutiny due to the interest of Paolo Constabile, the Master of the Sacred Palace, and Damiano Rossi da Cento, who were charged with compiling updated listings of prohibited books. Though *Orlando furioso* did not appear on any of those lists, Helm and Fragnito have argued that its circulation and availability were nonetheless obstructed since booksellers were not allowed to acquire new copies.<sup>229</sup> The Congregation of the Index debated Ariosto's romance again in the 1590s but its wide circulation deterred the censors from issuing a total ban.<sup>230</sup> Finally, in 1597 the Oratorian Tommaso Galletti reported *Orlando furioso* to Cardinal Giulio Antonio Sartori, a prominent member of the Holy Office; informed by Sartori, the Congregation of the Index ordered the revision and expurgation of all of Ariosto's works to the Inquisitor of Ferrara, Giovan Battista Scarella, in 1599. The following year both Scarella and Galletti sent their censorial suggestions. Galletti's *censura* was in two instalments, *Censura sopra alcune rime dell'Ariosto* and *Censura sopra la seconda parte e intorno ai Cinque canti*. The

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<sup>226</sup> Gabriele Barrio, *Pro lingua latina libri tres. De aeternitate liber unus. De laudibus Italiae liber unus* (Rome: De Angelis, 1571), CC4<sup>v</sup>, and with regard to Petrarch in general see CC4<sup>r</sup>-DD3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>227</sup> Barrio, *Pro lingua latina*, DD3<sup>r</sup>. On Ariosto see in particular DD3<sup>r</sup>-DD3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>228</sup> On Paleotti's report, which listed books requiring censorship and emendation, see Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>229</sup> Fragnito, '“Vanissimus et spurcissimus homo”', pp. 108-11; Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>230</sup> Helm, 'Literary Censorship', p. 203.

*censura* has only recently attracted the critical attention of Fragnito and Helm; the latter has noted that Scarella's *correctione* was more moderate than Galletti's censorship.<sup>231</sup>

At the same time as Ariosto's romance was discussed by censorial authorities, the Jesuit Antonio Possevino negatively criticised *Orlando furioso* in the *Bibliotheca selecta* (1593), a bibliographical encyclopedia strictly grounded in Catholic orthodoxy.<sup>232</sup> Possevino cites the poem among other chivalric works in the first book of his massive compendium and denounces it as an evil work that poses a danger for the souls of its readers. In chapter 25 of book I, Possevino stigmatises those works that were widely circulating in courts and among the nobility and lists as examples 'Lancelotus à Lacu, Perseforestus, Tristanus, Giro Cortesius, Amadisius, Primaleo, Boccaccii Decameron, et Ariosti poema'.<sup>233</sup> The mention of 'Ariosti poema' undoubtedly refers to *Orlando furioso* due to its inclusion among chivalric works.

The inclusion of Boccaccio's *novelle* in this list may seem out of place; its presence among chivalric poems may be due to the narrative and courtly nature of the *Decameron* and its licentiousness, features it shares with romances. Notably, however, the *Decameron* is also associated with chivalric works in Ghislieri's letter: Boccaccio's classic is included in a group of works made harmless by their fictional nature as fables. It is, then, their nature as fiction that connects works such as *Orlando furioso* and the *Decameron*. Possevino's subsequent criticism makes this more explicit. To this list, Possevino writes, is to be added a number of authors of despicable verses which are sold at a high price. He then goes further in his denunciation by claiming that such works are to be ascribed to Satan's project to corrupt Christian souls. Not only do they serve the devil's purpose, but they are also inspired by him: 'plerisque igitur istis omnibus, ut suavius venena instuerent, dedit de spiritu suo diabolus, eloquentia et inventione fabularum ditans ingenia, quae tam miserae suppellectilis voluere esse officinae'.<sup>234</sup> These words make clear that Satan favours this kind of literature by giving inspiration to the authors; implicitly, Possevino indicates Satan as the actual author of such works, a crucial ideological standpoint on authorship of Counter-Reformation literary culture as highlighted by Helm.<sup>235</sup> Notably, moreover, Possevino reverses the Lucretian *topos* by

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<sup>231</sup> Fragnito, '“Vanissimus et spurcissimus homo”', p. 118; Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 71-102, 124. Helm also provides the full transcription of Galletti's *censura* (*Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 289-411).

<sup>232</sup> Antonio Possevino, *Bibliotheca Selecta, qua agitur de Ratione Studiorum in historia, in disciplinis, in salute omnium procuranda* (Rome: typographica apostolica vaticana, 1593).

<sup>233</sup> Possevino, K3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>234</sup> Possevino, K3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>235</sup> Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 23-28.



comparing poetic fiction to poison.<sup>236</sup> His condemnation of fables, and therefore of romances and the *Furioso*, is radical and absolute.

The Counter-Reformation critical responses to *Orlando furioso* reveal the ambiguity of the reception of Ariosto's romance in the second half of the Cinquecento. On the one hand, the popularity and dissemination of *Orlando furioso* attracted the attention of censorial authorities while making its revision and expurgation an onerous task with a high chance of an ineffective outcome. On the other hand, for the same reasons, commentators championing the tenets of Reformed Catholicism reinforced the negative criticism of chivalric literature in general and Ariosto's romance in particular. The position of the Church oscillated between attempts at censorship and a more lenient tolerance. Eventually, the tolerant approach prevailed and in 1609 *Orlando furioso* was printed in Rome without expurgation with the permission of the Congregation of the Index.<sup>237</sup>

The reasons for this are manifold. From the perspective of religious authorities, the amount of works needing expurgation was quite considerable and precedence was given to those dedicated to specific professions.<sup>238</sup> Religious authorities, in fact, did not consider chivalric romances as dangerous as certain other works. In the case of *Orlando furioso* in particular, the presence of extensive paratextual frameworks providing a 'moralising interpretation of passages which were delicate in the eyes of the censors'<sup>239</sup> is likely to have made its expurgation less necessary, as suggested by Helm. Thus, the ideological repudiation of the *Furioso* did not hinder its circulation but in fact furthered its dissemination in a disguised form. In his analysis of expurgation as a broader phenomenon, Rozzo has argued that, as many literati became expurgators and a class of professional expurgators arose, the diffuse practice of correcting and amending literary works engendered a vast process of rewriting and rereading, that is, a 'metamorfosi mistificatoria' which significantly affected the production and reception of literary works.<sup>240</sup> Adapting the *Furioso* to religious ends, the rewritings that are discussed here are evidence of the dissemination of Ariosto's romance in the context of this process of *metamorfosi mistificatoria*.

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<sup>236</sup> On Possevino's reference to Lucretius see Prosperi, 'Di soavi licor gli orli del vaso', pp. 52-55.

<sup>237</sup> Fragnito, '“Vanissimus et spurcissimus homo”', p. 129.

<sup>238</sup> Fragnito, '“Vanissimus et spurcissimus homo”', p. 129.

<sup>239</sup> Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, p. 131; see pp. 132-133 for textual examples.

<sup>240</sup> Rozzo, pp. 133-134.

## 5. THE SPIRITUALISATION OF *ORLANDO FURIOSO* AND CRISTOFORO SCANELLO'S *PRIMO CANTO DELL'ARIOSTO TRADOTTO IN RIME SPIRITUALI* (1593)

### 5.1 The religious rewritings of Ariosto's romance

So far my discussion has shown that Counter-Reformation ideology and censorship as well as the reception of literary works fostered a fertile environment for the rewriting of vernacular classics from a religious perspective along the lines of Malipiero's *Petrarca spirituale*. This section moves on to consider the rewritings of *Orlando furioso* in particular. The first to rewrite the poem in religious terms was the Bolognese Giulio Cesare Croce (1550-1609), a popular storyteller and enthusiast of Ariosto. His *Rime compassionevoli, pietose, e devote sopra la passione, morte, e resurrezione del nostro Signore Giesù Cristo. Composte [...] ad imitazione del primo canto dell'Ariosto* was published in Florence after 1575 and reprinted many times in the Seicento as well. As the title makes clear, the subject of Croce's work is the story of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus: a narrative episode from the gospels replaces Ariosto's epic and romance narrative while the text constantly evokes canto I of the *Furioso*. These are Croce and Ariosto's first stanzas:<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> In the quotations of the rewritings by Croce, Scanello and Graziano I refer to their works by indicating the initials of the first two title words followed by the number of canto (where relevant) and stanza(s): Croce's *Rime compassionevoli* is *Rc*, Scanello's *Primo canto* is *Pc* and Graziano's *Orlando santo* is *Os*. With regard to Croce, I quote from *Rime compassionevoli et devote sopra la Passione, morte et resurrectione del N. Sig. Gesù Christo* (Bologna: Sebastiano Bonomi, 1620).

Le doglie, i gran martir, gli aspri languori,  
 le gravi offese in stil pietoso *canto*,  
 le qual sofferse il re de gl'alti chori,  
 da l'empio giudaismo iniquo tanto,  
*seguendo l'ire e i rabbiosi humori*  
 de scribe e farisei, *che si dier vanto*  
 di prender l'armi (ahi, stuolo ingrato) in  
 mano  
*contro di Christo, imperator soprano.*

*Dirò di Giuda, in un medesimo tratto,*  
 cosa empia da narrar in prosa, in rima,  
 che per danar commise il gran misfatto,  
 contro a chi tanto l'avea amato prima,  
*Se da Colei il cui Figliol fu fatto*  
 per me morir in su la croce in cima,  
*mi sia tanto favor hoggi concesso,*  
 che mi basti spiegar tanto successo.

Rc 1-2

Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,  
 le cortesie, le audaci imprese io *canto*,  
 che furo al tempo che passaro i Mori  
 d'Africa il mare, e in Francia nocquer  
 tanto, *seguendo l'ire e i giovenil furori*  
 d'Agramante lor re, *che si diè vanto*  
 di vendicar la morte di Troiano  
*sopra re Carlo imperator romano.*

*Dirò d'Orlando in un medesimo tratto*  
 cosa non detta in prosa mai né in rima:  
 che per amor venne in furore e matto,  
 d'uom che sì saggio era stimato prima;  
*se da colei che tal quasi m'ha fatto*  
 che 'l poco ingegno ad or ad or mi  
 lima  
*me ne sarà però tanto concesso,*  
 che mi basti a finir quanto ho  
 promesso.

Of I, 1-2

The comparison between Ariosto's text and Croce's shows that the latter not only retains the end rhymes of the former, and often the same end words of Ariosto's verses (such as *canto*, *tanto*, *vanto*), but he also cites Ariosto's phrases (such as 'seguendo l'ire', 'che si dier vanto', 'in un medesimo tratto'). Furthermore, the emphasised verses show that the structure of Croce's stanzas is noticeably based on Ariosto's text.

In his study on parody in the Cinquecento, Nicola Catelli has acutely observed that Croce's *Rime compassionevoli* are based on the refunctioning of Ariosto's narrative mechanisms, so that the two models, the chivalric romance and the sacred text, mirror each other. Investigating literary parodic literary practices, Catelli ultimately defines parody as '[un] insieme di forme nel quale la pratica d'elezione della sostituzione lessicale è inserita in un ampio spettro di opzioni metamorfiche che agiscono sugli elementi costitutivi del corpo testuale',<sup>242</sup> and he considers the works of Malipiero and Croce to be a form of parody, specifically sacred parodies.<sup>243</sup> A specific definition of the works that have been generally referred to as spiritualisations would be highly problematic due to the great heterogeneity such works display in terms of intertextual modalities and approach to the source-text. Scholarly criticism has, then, accepted the Latinism *contrafactum*, which Bruce Wardropper created to define generally a religious

<sup>242</sup> Nicola Catelli, *Parodiae libertas. Sulla parodia italiana nel Cinquecento* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2011), p. 164.

<sup>243</sup> Catelli, *Parodiae libertas*, pp. 48-54, 133.

poem that is a reworded version of a secular one, particularly in the context of Spanish literary culture.<sup>244</sup> However, the reasons underpinning the practice of *contrafactum* have been the object of debate. John Crosbie in particular has challenged the notion that it was specifically motivated by moralising or censoring intentions.<sup>245</sup> Provided that, as has been seen, the cultural policy of the Church was extremely pervasive, the late-Cinquecento religious rewritings that are here taken into consideration reflect the heterogeneity of the literary fashion for religious recastings of profane works in terms of imitation and ideological distancing from the source-text.

A second religious rewriting of the *Furioso* was published in 1589. The work of a mysterious author, the *Primo canto del Furioso, traslatato in spirituale* by Goro da Colcellalto was printed in Florence. As in Croce's text, Ariosto's romance is replaced by a religious episode: the rewriting revolves around the biblical story of the Fall, which is represented as the cause of the moral corruption of the author's contemporary era. However, as my analysis will show, the two rewritings are very different in their approach to Ariosto's text. Furthermore, Goro's work also circulated outside Tuscany as it was reprinted in Naples in 1593 as the work of wandering *cantastorie* Cristoforo Scanello. Finally, in 1596 the *Furioso spirituale* by Vincenzo Marino was published in Messina. Marino's work represents the only attempt at rewriting Ariosto's whole poem rather than only a part of it. Because of its magnitude and complexity, which set it apart from previous rewritings of the *Furioso*, Marino's poem is discussed in Part Five, which is entirely dedicated to its analysis.

It was not simply the *Furioso* that was rewritten: the Venetian Giulio Cornelio Graziano, author of an *ottava rima* poem in praise of the Virgin (1547), composed a poem meaningfully entitled *Di Orlando santo vita, et morte con ventimilla christiani uccisi in Roncisvalle; cavata dal catalogo de santi* (1597).<sup>246</sup> Graziano's work resumes the chivalric tradition depicting Orlando as a Christian hero and a Saint of the Catholic Church in opposition to the predominant representation of Orlando as a knight and a victim of his own passion for a woman. Graziano's work is based on the utter rejection of the romance tradition of Boiardo and Ariosto:

L'alto pregio, il valor, la santa morte  
voglio cantar, con dolorosi carmi,  
del più saggio guerriero e del più forte,

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<sup>244</sup> Bruce Wardropper, *Historia de la poesía lírica a lo divino: en la cristiandad occidental* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1958).

<sup>245</sup> John Crosbie, *A lo Divino Lyric Poetry: an Alternative View* (Durham: University of Durham, 1989).

<sup>246</sup> Giulio Cornelio Graziano, *Le lode di Maria Vergine* (Venice: Bartolomeo detto l'Imperatore, 1547); *Di Orlando santo vita, et morte con ventimilla christiani uccisi in Roncisvalle; [...]* (Treviso: Deuchino, 1597).

che in guerra mai portasse scudo, et armi  
(dico) d'Orlando, e de l'eccelsa corte  
del magno Carlo, che tra duri marmi  
di cui si vede la memoria loro,  
sculpita in carmi relucenti, e d'oro.

[...]  
Dirò del *conte Orlando invito* [sic], *e santo*  
che d'antiqui guerrieri maggior non veggio  
[...]

[...]

Non da carnal desio, non d'amor cieco  
fu Orlando mai ne la sua vita vinto,  
né pazzo mai cercò selva, né speco  
*come l'hanno i scrittor bugiardi finto*;  
ma il vero amor di Dio sempr' hebbe seco  
e per lui portò il brando al fianco cinto,  
e per il nome suo già morir volse,  
*né mai per donna in van la spade tolse.*

*Os* I, 1-2, 4

Graziano's subject is introduced as completely antithetical to the narratives of Boiardo and Ariosto. While Orlando retains his traditional attributes of strength and wisdom ('del più saggio guerriero e del più forte' *Os* I, 1), Graziano denounces the poetic lies according to which he fell in love with a woman and lost his sanity because of it ('come l'hanno i scrittor bugiardi finto' *Os* I, 4). The core issue for Graziano is the fictional nature of the romance narratives of Boiardo and Ariosto, because their poetic lies dangerously subvert the truth of the exemplarity of Orlando as a Christian champion ('Orlando invito e santo' *Os* I, 4). Thus, Graziano's aim is to rewrite the story of Orlando in a manner consistent with a religious exemplarity and whose veracity is opposed to the falsehood of his love and madness. The works of Croce, Goro-Scanello (Scanello re-proposed Goro's text for printing in Naples, as will be seen), Marino and, partly, Graziano are all manifestations of the complex and heterogeneous phenomenon of the spiritualisation of *Orlando furioso*: while disguised through manipulation and alteration, and ideologically challenged, Ariosto's romance nonetheless continued circulating, especially at a popular level, and penetrated new cultural domains.

## 5.2 Cristoforo Scanello as a disseminator of literary works

Before focussing on Scanello's work, some important considerations are required with regard to Scanello, a wandering street-singer from Forlì. His *Primo Canto dell'Ariosto*

*tradotto in rime spirituali* offers significant evidence of the reception and dissemination of *Orlando furioso* in compliance with the cultural and ideological developments of Counter-Reformation Italy. Though Scanello's work, taken from Goro's, was not developed within Neapolitan literary culture, it nonetheless significantly testifies to the presence of *Orlando furioso* in Southern Italy. In fact, its publication in Naples indicates that the appeal of the *Primo canto* transcended geographic and cultural boundaries and that its cultural and literary features could be adapted to the Neapolitan cultural milieu. As the *Primo canto* was originally published in Tuscany, Scanello's role in the dissemination of Goro's text requires further investigation in order to shed light on his choice to have a religious rewriting of *Orlando furioso* printed in Naples in 1593.

Cristoforo Scanello, nicknamed 'il Cieco da Forlì', spent much of his life travelling throughout the Italian peninsula.<sup>247</sup> As a result of his wanderings, his literary production was scattered throughout Italy. As he wrote and published many chronicles from several parts of Italy, Scanello's name is mentioned by other writers of chronicles, though very few.<sup>248</sup> He was, then, known in his time as a chronicler, as well as a street-singer. Scanello wrote five chronicles in his lifetime; the fact that two of them were published twice, the chronicles of the *Marca Trevigiana* and those of the *antica regione di Toscana*, and in different places, respectively Venice and Bologna, Genoa and Florence, indicates that his works had at least a moderate appeal for the reading public.<sup>249</sup>

More importantly, beside historical chronicles in prose, his vast production included poetry that was often actually authored by others. Scanello, in fact, contributed to the production and dissemination of a variety of poetic works, including love poetry, chivalric poems, religious poems and vernacular translations of classics. His travels allowed him to come into contact with different cultural and literary local traditions; his chronicles suggest that he was in contact with figures of local importance, including fellow writers and members of the clergy. Thus, Ludovico Pepe reports Scanello's praise for Secondo Tarentino, author of the *Bradamante gelosa*, mentioned in 3.3 and of a theatre play entitled *Il capitan bizzarro* (1551), and Mario di Leo, author of a mythological poem

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<sup>247</sup> To date, there are only two monographs dedicated to Scanello's biography: Ludovico Pepe's *Il Cieco da Forlì cronista e poeta del secolo XVI. Notizie e Saggi*, (Naples: Accademia Reale Delle Scienze, 1892), and Adamo Pasini, *Vita e scritti di Cristoforo Scanello detto 'il Cieco da Forlì'* (Forlì: Valbonesi, 1937). The latter includes the transcription of most of Scanello's works.

<sup>248</sup> Pepe, pp. 7-9.

<sup>249</sup> *Cronica dell'illustre et antiqua provincia della Marca Trivigiana, et ducato di Friulli, [...] (Venice: de' Franceschi, 1574); Invidia d'ogni mal principio, e guida (Bologna: Bonardo, [1584(?)]); Cronica universale de l'antica regione di Toscana, [...] (Genoa: Bellone, 1571; Florence: [n. pub.], 1572).*

entitled *Amore prigioniero* (1538).<sup>250</sup> The editorial history of Tansillo's religious poem *Lacrime di San Pietro* is indicative of Scanello's attention to local production. The Neapolitan poet's unfinished work was first published in 1577 in Fermo at the request of Scanello, who heavily revised and altered the text and in the following years had it printed also in other cities.<sup>251</sup> These editions precede the ones edited by Giovan Battista Attendolo and Tommaso Costo, mentioned in the Introduction. Tansillo's stanzas already circulated in Venetian prints, which provided the source for Scanello's editions, as suggested by Francesco Luciola.<sup>252</sup> As one of the first to disseminate Tansillo's stanzas, Scanello played a significant role in the circulation and popularisation of a poem that was printed at least ten times between 1577 and 1599 apart from his own editions.

The role played by Scanello in disseminating literary works for popular consumption is further exemplified by the cases of Alessandro Guarnelli's vernacular translation of the *Aeneid* and of Aretino's chivalric poem *Marfisa*. The first book of the *Aeneid* translated by the Roman Guarnelli (*Della Eneide di Virgilio [...] in ottava rima. Libro primo*) dates back to 1554 while the translation of the second book of Virgil's epic (*Il secondo libro dell'Eneida di Virgilio [...] in ottava rima*) was published in 1566. Both were printed in Rome, where Guarnelli was the secretary of Cardinal Alessandro Farnese. Scanello had Guarnelli's works printed in Venice, Florence, Naples and Urbino (in the latter only the translation of the second book).<sup>253</sup>

Similarly, Scanello's role was significant in the dissemination of Pietro Aretino's *Marfisa*. Scanello's *Stanze sopra la morte di Rodomonte. Nelle quali si contiene le prove che fece quell'anima disperata nell'altro mondo* are actually sixty stanzas taken from Aretino's chivalric poem, specifically stanzas 46-108 of canto I.<sup>254</sup> Unlike in the case of

<sup>250</sup> Ludovico Pepe, *Il Cieco da Forlì*, pp. 12-16. Secondo Tarentino, as his surname suggests, was from Taranto. The play *Il capitano bizzarro* was performed in Taranto but printed in Venice by Agostino Bindoni in 1551. Mario di Leo was a poet from Barletta; *Amore prigioniero* (Naples: Sulzbach, 1538) is his only known work to date (see Marina Frettoni, 'di Leo, Mario', in *DBI*, XL (1991), pp. 62-63).

<sup>251</sup> According to Borraccini Verducci there are at least five editions of Tansillo's poem edited by Scanello: the *Rime spirituali del signor Luigi Tansillo. Nelle quali si contengono le pietose lagrime che fece San Pietro, dopo l'haver negato il suo Signore. Con dui sonetti, uno dell'Incarnazione, e l'altro della Passione di Christo. Nuovamente poste in luce per Christoforo cieco da Forlì*, were first printed in Ancona and then in Fermo by Astolfo Grandi in 1577, in Perugia and in Siena in 1579 (same edition, unknown publisher), and finally in L'Aquila (by Cacchi) and Bologna (by Rossi) in 1580. Rosa Marisa Borraccini Verducci, *Astolfo Grandi e Giovanni Giubari prototipografi fermani e Stanze sopra la morte di Rodomonte* (Fermo: Andrea Livi, 2003), pp. 63-64.

<sup>252</sup> Francesco Luciola, 'Appunti sulle raccolte di rime spirituali di Cristoforo Scanello, detto il Cieco da Forlì' in *La Bibbia in poesia*, ed. by R. Alhaique Pettinelli and others (= *Studi (e testi) italiani*, 35 (2015)), 103-121 (pp. 104-105).

<sup>253</sup> See Borraccini Verducci, pp. 64-65.

<sup>254</sup> The different number of stanzas is due to the alterations Scanello made to Aretino's text. It is noteworthy, moreover, that a reworking of Ariosto's last canto including some of Aretino's stanzas on Rodomonte's fate in hell circulated in French in a volume including various imitations of Ariosto: Philippe Des Portes, *Roland Furieux. Imitation de l'Arioste. -La Mort de Rodomont, et sa descente aux enfers, partie imitée de*

Guarnelli's work, Scannello does not acknowledge Aretino's authorship and in one edition he explicitly introduces the work as his own: *Stanze [...] Inventione poetica da Christoforo Scannello detto il Cieco da Forlì*. While not acknowledging authorship was common practice in cheap popular print, in this particular instance it may also be due to the fact that Aretino's *opera omnia* was put on the Index of 1559 and then of 1564. Scannello had the *Stanze sopra la morte di Rodomonte* printed three times, in Fermo in 1562 and 1578, in Orvieto in 1582 and in Venice in 1584: Aretino's stanzas then circulated as an independent poem and became quite popular.<sup>255</sup> The cases of the poems of Guarnelli and Aretino show that Scannello was able to recognise and exploit the potential of literary works within a wider cultural context and that as a result he actively participated in the dissemination of such works, which he adapted according to his goals.

Moreover, Cristoforo Scannello was well known by his contemporaries as a travelling street-singer and performer, as the mentions of him in works such as *I Ragguagli di Parnaso* (1616) and *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (1586) suggest. In his encyclopedia of professions and crafts, Tommaso Garzoni briefly mentions Scannello in the chapter entitled 'De' formatori di spettacoli in genere, et de' ceretani, o ciurmatori massime' while Traiano Boccalini, who defines him as 'famoso cantimbanco Italiano', dedicates a *ragguaglio* to the street-singer from Forlì.<sup>256</sup> Admitted by Apollo into Parnassus, Scannello thinks this is due to his incomparable skills as verse improviser but it is eventually revealed that Apollo simply wanted to charge the blind street-singer with the task of teaching his *letterati* to walk well and safely. Boccalini mocks Scannello's skills and confidence: he acknowledges his abilities but also ridicules him by drawing a negative comparison with refined poets. The improvised verses of *cantimbanchi* are of inferior quality to those artfully and elegantly composed by cultured poets. Scannello, who boasts of being able to 'cantar cento ottave all'improvviso' on a given subject 'alla barba de' poetucci stitici, che quaranta settimane si spremevano per far' un misero Sonetto',<sup>257</sup> is at the same time criticised and acknowledged for excelling in the art of improvising verses.

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*l'Arioste, partie de l'inuention de l'auteur. [...] [n. pub.] [n. p.] (1572).* The work of De Portes was later translated into English by Gervase Markham: *Rodomonths Infernall, Or The Diuell Conquered. Ariostos Conclusions. [...] Written In French By Phillip De Portes, and Paraphrastically Translated By G. M.* (London: Valentine Simmes, 1607).

<sup>255</sup> On Scannello's editions of the *Stanze sopra la morte di Rodomonte* see Borraccini Verducci, p. 73.

<sup>256</sup> For Garzoni's mention of Scannello see Tommaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo*, (Venice: Somasco, 1586), BBB5<sup>v</sup> (p.762); for Boccalini's see *ragguaglio XVIII* of Traiano Boccalini, *De' Ragguagli di Parnaso centuria seconda* (Venice: G. Guerigli, 1616), H4<sup>r</sup>-H6<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>257</sup> Boccalini, H5<sup>r</sup>.



Scanello's literary and editorial undertakings share a common feature, that is to say the wide and popular audience at which they were directed. The choice of promoting works in *ottava rima* is indicative with regard to the audience as it is consistent with the oral tradition of popular *cantari*, the *ottava rima* narrative poems sung before crowds in piazzas. Wandering performers were common throughout Italy in the sixteenth century and acted as mediators between high and low culture as well as between written and oral culture. They catered to a varied public which aggregated in the cities' piazzas, the urban centres of Renaissance cities. The social standing of street-singers underwent significant changes in the late sixteenth century, when a stronger need to control cultural spaces emerged: seen as potentially subversive due to their liminal position in the urban social landscape, these wandering performers were confined by civic and religious authorities to the space of the piazza, thus widening the social and cultural gap between popular and elite performances.<sup>258</sup> As a result street-singers adapted their work to suit the cultural environment of the Counter-Reformation: significantly, Massimo Rospoher and Rosa Salzberg mention Scanello as an example of those who adjusted to the new context.<sup>259</sup> The choice of editing and publishing Tansillo's religious poem highlights Scanello's interest in works that could suit the tastes of the public as well as the desiderata of the Catholic Church. As Francesco Lucioli has pointed out, more than a simple author or imitator, Scanello picked, gathered and edited texts according to a specific editorial strategy.<sup>260</sup> His activity in Naples in particular shows how he acted as a mediator between popular culture, traditionally connected to verses in *ottava rima* and chivalric poems, and post-Tridentine cultural and religious concerns.

### 5.3 Cristoforo Scanello and Naples

Scanello's literary production in Naples amounts to three works: Guarnelli's *Primo canto dell'Eneide* published by Salviani in 1581, the *Cronica dell'isola di Sicilia*, published in 1587 by Mattia Cancer, and the *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali*, published in 1593 by Carlino and Pace. These works are very different in terms of genre and were printed by different printers. While the *Cronica* belongs to the traditional genre of chronicles like most of Scanello's production, the translation of the *Aeneid* by

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<sup>258</sup> See Massimo Rospoher and Rosa Salzberg, 'Street Singers in Italian Renaissance Urban Culture and Communication', *Cultural & Social History*, 9 (2012), 9-26 (pp. 17-19). See also Brian Richardson, 'The Social Connotations of Singing Verse in Cinquecento Italy', *The Italianist*, 34 (2014), 362-378.

<sup>259</sup> Rospoher and Salzberg, p. 20.

<sup>260</sup> Lucioli, pp. 113-114.

Guarnelli was the only *volgarizzamento* Scanello reproduced in many different places and the *Primo canto* represents the only religious rewriting published by the street-singer from Forlì. Scanello's interest in religious poetry was not a novelty but the *Primo canto* is unique in that it is the religious rewriting of a major poem, and of *Orlando furioso* in particular. Scanello's interest in chivalric romances is also evident from his previous publication of the *Stanze sopra la morte di Rodomonte*. The fact that the *Primo canto* was published in Naples is surprising if we consider the well-known preference accorded to Tasso over Ariosto in the Kingdom in the late Cinquecento and raises questions with regard to the actual presence of *Orlando furioso* at a popular level. A broader understanding of the specific literary context in which Scanello operated, which takes into account in particular the poems in *ottava rima* printed in Naples and the strategies of printers, can elucidate on his editorial choices.

The literary production in *ottava rima* in the Kingdom of Naples was not as copious as it was in other parts of Italy. Between 1571 and 1593 fewer than a dozen works in octaves were published in the capital, including Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*. Most of this production was connected to the battle of Lepanto: in 1571 Gaspare Caffarino wrote *Il naval conflitto di christiani con turchi, e la gloriosa vittoria della Santa Lega del sereniss. don Gio. D'Austria generale di quella.*, in 1573 Pietro Sagliano composed *Ottave [...]nella quale si tratta de la presa di Cipri; navale vittoria e di quant'è occorso infin al mese di maggio 73*; in the same year Tommaso Costo's *La rotta di Lepanto* was published, followed in 1582 by *La vittoria della lega*.<sup>261</sup> The battle of Lepanto, in which many members of the Neapolitan aristocracy participated, had a great impact on literature and inspired many works, such as Ferrante Carafa's *Austria*.<sup>262</sup> The conflict with the Ottoman Empire affected Naples in particular because of the kingdom's geographic position. Even after the victory of Juan of Austria, commander of the fleet of the Holy League, the Neapolitan Kingdom was still subject to a situation of 'stato di guerra endemica'<sup>263</sup> in the Mediterranean and, despite the change of geopolitical balances, underwent continuous incursions from Barbary and Ottoman pirates.<sup>264</sup>

Two works in *ottava rima* deserve a special mention in relation to Scanello's choice of proposing a religious rewriting of *Orlando furioso*. The *Opera nova nella quale si*

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<sup>261</sup> Caffarino's work was published by Cacchi on behalf of Andrea Bax, Sagliano's by Andrea Bax; notably, the publisher of Costo's poems Cappelli was an associate of Bax.

<sup>262</sup> Ferrante Carafa, *Dell'Austria [...] dove si contiene la vittoria della santa lega all'Echinadi, divisa in cinque parti. [...]* (Naples: Cacchi, 1572).

<sup>263</sup> Giuseppe Galasso, *Storia del Regno di Napoli*, 5 vols (Turin: Utet, 2006-2007), II, p. 778.

<sup>264</sup> Galasso points out that after Lepanto the Spanish Empire turned its attention to France and the Atlantic while the Ottoman Empire focussed its attention on the East. Galasso, II, pp. 779, 835-838.

*contiene un bellissimo discorso sopra alcune stantie dell'Ariosto, e quattro villanelle alla napolitana, con un dialogo amoroso, et una stantia che insegna a fuggir amore [...]*, published around 1580 by Giulio Cesare Napolitano, is a small book containing verses for popular entertainment. The first part of the book is the *Discorso sopra l'Ariosto*,<sup>265</sup> whose title evokes that of the popular *Discorsi sopra il Furioso* of Laura Terracina<sup>266</sup> and which is in fact a *trasmutazione* from *Orlando furioso* (Of XIX, 1). The presence of Ariosto's romance together with *villanelle*, a Neapolitan popular form of profane vocal music, suggests that the *Furioso* was not only still present but also deeply rooted in the cultural memory of the people. The other work in *ottava rima* is Giuseppe da Gerusalemme's *Ottave spirituali de i mesi dell'anno con le feste loro*, published in Naples in the 1590s, which is notable for the use of the *ottava rima* in a poem of devotional nature.<sup>267</sup> The picture here delineated can easily account for Scanello's choice to propose for reprinting the religious rewriting of a popular chivalric romance, particularly one that references Lepanto and the religious conflict with the Ottoman Empire, as is the case in the *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali*.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the *Primo canto* was published by Giovanni Giacomo Carlino and Antonio Pace, who worked together in Naples and Vico Equense between 1591 and 1599.<sup>268</sup> As pointed out by Marinelli, the activity of these two printers is significantly connected to Paolo Regio, bishop of Vico Equense.<sup>269</sup> Between 1584 and 1599 Regio promoted typographic activity by inviting to Vico Equense the main printers of Naples, among whom were Cacchi, Carlino, Pace and Salviani. It is not surprising, then, that most of the production of Carlino and Pace was of a religious and theological nature, and that it was directed to a wide public: a 'produzione variegata [...] che rispecchia una vivace temperie culturale nella capitale del Viceregno, in cui rigorosi studi teologici si alternano ad una religiosità più popolare alimentata da fervide agiografie e da

<sup>265</sup> *Opera nova nella quale si contiene un bellissimo discorso sopra alcune stantie dell'Ariosto, e quattro villanelle alla napolitana, con un dialogo amoroso, et una stantia che insegna a fuggir amore [...]* ([Naples]: Giulio Cesare Napolitano, 1580), A1<sup>v</sup>-A2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>266</sup> On Terracina's work see the Introduction.

<sup>267</sup> The publisher is unknown. According to Edit16, Giuseppe da Gerusalemme was a Jew who converted to Christianity; his work was published in several Italian cities, including Venice and Palermo. The *princeps* was printed in 1588: Giuseppe da Gerusalemme, *Ottave spirituali de mesi di l'anno, con le feste loro, coposte [sic] per Gioseppe di Gierusale hebreo, fatto christiano*. (Copertino: [n. pub.], 1588).

<sup>268</sup> On Giovanni Giacomo Carlino I refer to Giuseppina Monaco, 'Carlino, Giovanni Giacomo', in *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani. Il Cinquecento*, ed. by Marco Menato, Ennio Sandal and Giuseppina Zappella, 1 vol. (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 1997 -), I, pp. 258-261; and Lucia Marinelli, 'Carlino, Giovanni Giacomo & Pace, Antonio', in *Dizionario degli editori, tipografi, librai itineranti in Italia tra Quattrocento e Seicento*, 3 vols, ed. by Marco Santoro and others (Pisa: Fabrizio Serra, 2013), I, pp. 233-235.

<sup>269</sup> Marinelli, p. 233.

scrupolosi manuali per la salvazione [...]'.<sup>270</sup> Only two works printed by Carlino and Pace, moreover, were poems in *ottava rima*, namely Agostino de Cupiti's *Caterina martirizzata* (1593) and Cataldo Antonio Mannarino's *Glorie di guerrieri e d'amanti* (1596).<sup>271</sup>

While the *Caterina martirizzata* is a *poema sacro* on the life of Saint Catherine of Alexandria based on Tasso's epic model, the *Glorie di guerrieri e d'amanti* is a *poema eroico* that draws both on Tasso and Ariosto. While Tasso clearly appears to be Mannarino's predominant model, the Southern poet often also evokes *Orlando furioso* through reflections expressed in opposition to Ariosto's in proems as well as more or less explicit allusions.<sup>272</sup> The subject of Mannarino's work is the Ottoman attack on Taranto of 1594: the main theme of the poem is therefore the religious conflict between Ottomans and Christians, a central issue of Counter-Reformation culture. Considering that Mannarino was from Taranto, his work also provides interesting evidence of the presence of Ariosto's model in a provincial context. Mannarino's poem is indicative of the fact that the romance genre was at the same time rejected and appropriated, as Javitch has argued especially with regard to poetic theory: significantly, he speaks of the haunting of the romance, which is incorporated into the theoretical discussion on epics while it is attacked.<sup>273</sup> This dynamic will also be seen in Sicilian epic poems in Part Four. In a period when the control of authorities over the printing industry was becoming more and more rigorous,<sup>274</sup> it is clear that Carlino and Pace played an important role in the promotion of Counter-Reformation values, and that the publication of the *Primo canto* was part of this strategy.

Very sensitive to the tastes of a reading public varying from academics and educated literati to popular crowds, Scanello was a smart exploiter of other people's literary endeavours. His choice to print a religious rewriting of *Orlando furioso* in Naples suggests that Ariosto's romance remained alive in the memory of the people to the point that recalling it by direct allusion and citation was deemed an effort worth taking, and the presence of the *Furioso* together with *villanelle*, too, points to the popularity of the

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<sup>270</sup> Marinelli, p. 234.

<sup>271</sup> Cataldo Antonio Mannarino, *Glorie di guerrieri e d'amanti in nuova impresa nella città di Taranto succedute. Poema heroico [...]* (Naples: Carlino and Pace, 1596).

<sup>272</sup> For an overview of Mannarino's poem I refer to the introduction of the recent antological edition by Grazia Distaso: Cataldo Antonio Mannarino, *Glorie di guerrieri e d'amanti*, ed. by Grazia Distaso (Fasano: Schena, 1995), pp. 10-42.

<sup>273</sup> Daniel Javitch, 'Lo spettro del romanzo nella teoria sull'epica del sedicesimo secolo', *Rinascimento*, 43, 2003, 159-176.

<sup>274</sup> Pasquale Lopez observes that by the end of the Cinquecento post-Tridentine policies in the Kingdom of Naples had prevailed (Lopez, p. 165).

romance. The fact that in Naples no editions of *Orlando furioso* were published between 1550 and 1599 may be misleading, as circulation of books went beyond local borders and Venice supplied the entire peninsula as Italy's main publishing centre.<sup>275</sup> Scanello was then proposing to revisit a well-known work to an audience who was familiar with it and could appreciate the references to Ariosto.

As a work reproduced by an author traditionally associated with productions for popular consumption, Scanello's rewriting showcases the dissemination of the *Furioso* on a popular level outside the traditional chivalric frame with which Ariosto's romance was commonly identified. Since it transposes Ariosto's narrative from the genre of romance to that of religious poetry, the *Primo canto* represents an extremely relevant example of appropriation and productive reception. The next sections of this chapter, therefore, focus on Scanello's work. After considering the relation between Scanello's text and Goro's and the other religious rewritings of the *Furioso*, my analysis will explore the dynamics that underpin Scanello's approach to and manipulation of Ariosto's poem.

#### 5.4 Goro, Scanello, and the other religious rewritings of *Orlando furioso*

As noted, the author of the *Primo canto*, Goro da Colcellalto, is a mysterious figure who did not publish any other work. The short introductory letter by the publisher, Francesco Dini da Colle, merely mentions him as a simple and devout man.<sup>276</sup> Dini dedicates Goro's 'Stanze cattolicamente tramutate'<sup>277</sup> to Maria Grifoni Usimbardi, very likely a relation of the prominent Tuscan families Grifoni and Usimbardi. A blind travelling editor, Dini specialised in popular pamphlets.<sup>278</sup> A wandering *cantimbanco*, Scanello appropriated the text of another wandering editor and reproduced it in a different geographical context with a few changes.

The first visible change concerns the title: Goro's *Primo canto del Furioso, translato in spirituale* becomes Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali*. Unlike Goro, Scanello mentions Ariosto's name, which was seemingly identified with the *Furioso*. Scanello's work, moreover, did not have any dedication or introduction, as the *Primo canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali* is a volume in dodicesimo without any paratextual additions or images.

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<sup>275</sup> *Orlando furioso* could still be found in Neapolitan bookshops: see Lopez, pp. 120-124.

<sup>276</sup> Goro, *Primo canto*, A1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>277</sup> Goro, *Primo canto*, A1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>278</sup> See Fabio Massimo Bertolo, 'Dini, Francesco', in *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani. Il Cinquecento*, ed. by Marco Menato, I, p. 379.

More importantly, Scanello altered the structure of Goro's rewriting. Goro's stanzas are introduced by the first verse of the corresponding stanza of the *Furioso*:

1. *Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, e gl'amori*  
le doglie, i gran martir l'armi, e' rumori  
le crudeltadi, e le ruine, e 'l pianto,  
e l'humane discordie, e i grandi errori  
del mondo pazzo, e furioso io canto;  
che 'l pastor sommo, i re, gl'imperatori  
di risanarlo si potrian dar vanto,  
a quelle unite l'aiutrice mano  
d'ogni Signore, et principe christiano.
2. *Dirò d'Orlando in un medesimo tratto*  
Dirà dell'huomo in un medesimo tratto  
[...]
3. *Piacciavi generosa herculea prole*  
Piacciavi, reformata e santa prole  
[...]

The italicised verses, which are direct citations of *Of I*, 1-3, are excised in Scanello's work, which then reproduces only the stanzas reworked by Goro. The presence of the *Furioso* as a reference is thus more explicit in Goro than in Scanello. Notably, these direct citations of Ariosto are not integrated within Goro's new narrative but rather remain on its threshold, to reactivate the reader's memory of the *Furioso* and signal its distance from the new poem. It is worthy of notice, however, that, for a reason that is not possible to ascertain, Ariosto's text is cited in this manner up until *Of I*, 60, when Bradamante appears as an unknown knight, after which the first verses of Ariosto's stanzas are not cited anymore, leaving only Goro's text.

Another significant difference between Goro and Scanello is the excision of three stanzas by the latter. These stanzas correspond to *Of I*, 78-80 and deal with the reincarnation of Jesus and the salvation of men. After narrating the episode of the Fall, then, Scanello does not mention Christ's salvific sacrifice. The reason for this omission is not clear but, considering the ephemeral nature of pamphlets such as Goro's, it is possible that the edition Scanello accessed was incomplete or somehow damaged. Though due to unknown reasons, these alterations are indicative of the extent to which religious rewritings could be modified and manipulated as they circulated from one context, be it geographical, editorial or cultural, to another.

In a recent article, Andrea Torre has compared the three religious rewritings of *Orlando furioso* by Croce, Scanello and Graziano exploring the parodic extent of each

work.<sup>279</sup> These three texts are grouped together because of their parodic reference to *Orlando furioso* from a religious perspective despite their different cultural and literary origin. Torre points out that Graziano's *Orlando Santo* is to be set apart since, as a new poem, it re-proposes the traditional chivalric character Orlando as a champion of Catholic orthodoxy. The author's intent was not simply to rewrite Ariosto but rather to rewrite the chivalric tradition connected to the character Orlando, who had been slandered especially by Ariosto's lies. Moreover, Torre has shown that the superimposition of narrative functions between Croce's text and Ariosto's has ideological consequences especially for the redefinition of Ariosto's characters. With regard to the *Primo canto*, Torre argues that Scanello operates a *rimozione memoriale* of *Orlando furioso*: as the continuous moral and psychological wandering of Ariosto's characters is opposed as sinful and the episode of the disobedience of Adam and Eve ideally overlaps with the meeting of Sacripante and Angelica, associating the princess of Cathay with Lucifer, romance pluralism and Ariosto's worldview are condemned from a militant Counter-Reformation standpoint. However, a closer examination of the narrative mechanisms, images and references in Scanello's text will reveal that, while Ariosto's romance is critically attacked, it is at the same time assimilated into the background of the new text, thus guaranteeing its permanence.

### 5.5 Echoing Ariosto's rhymes and the revision of *Orlando furioso*

The title of Scanello's rewriting refers to an act of translation, which etymologically implies the idea of transposing Ariosto's text from his original cultural domain to a new one. Unlike Malipiero, who presents his work as authored by Petrarch, Scanello does not imply the refutation and revision of *Orlando furioso* by his original author. Instead, the simple mention of the act of translation draws attention to the author of the rewriting and therefore to his role in appropriating and reworking the source-text. The *Primo canto*, then, does not pretend to reflect Ariosto's true intentions, as Malipiero's work does with Petrarch's, but directly signals its critical distance from Ariosto and his poem.

Scanello's rewriting develops multiple themes, including in particular heresy and original sin, which are all interconnected and refer to the broader issue of contemporary heresy, which is the macro-theme underpinning Scanello's literary strategy. The *Primo canto* consists of two main parts, one (*Pc* 1-25) urging Christians to fight against heresy

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<sup>279</sup> Andrea Torre, 'Orlando santo. Riuni di testi e immagini tra parodia e devozione', in *Tra mille carte vive ancora*, ed. by Bolzoni, Pezzini and Rizzarelli, pp. 255-279.

and the Ottoman empire, and the other (*Pc* 25-78) narrating the biblical tale of original sin and its consequences. Scanello connects the two parts by stating that victory over the enemies of Christianity will restore the original Edenic dimension from before man's fall. It is clear that in terms of content the *Primo canto* is very distant from its source, which nonetheless provides a point of reference for the rhyming pattern and thematic units.

Scanello's poem consists of 78 stanzas which follow the rhyming pattern of the original source up to stanza 77: as noted above, Scanello's rewriting skips three stanzas (*Of* I, 78-80), so that stanza 78 corresponds to *Of* I, 81. Scanello consistently adopts Ariosto's rhyming endings except in six instances, where he openly deviates from Ariosto: in stanza 6 Ariosto's rhymes *punto-giunto* becomes *ponto-conto*, in stanza 11 *torse-s'accorse* become *opporsi-morsi*, in stanza 21 *groppe-galoppa* becomes *zoppa-scoppia*, in stanza 27 *uccidesti-promettesti-volesti* becomes *misti-acquisti-tristi*, in stanza 29 *arricciossi-fermossi-nomossi* become *fosse-posse-riscosse* and finally in stanza 43 *inanti-amanti* becomes *errante-piante*. It is clear, however, that even in the few cases where Scanello does not follow Ariosto's rhyming endings, his deviations remain phonetically close to the source-text.

However, in terms of rhyming words Scanello's reference to the source is inconsistent and ranges from an almost complete repetition of Ariosto's rhyming words to the simple reuse of one or more elements within a stanza. More specifically, Scanello often uses Ariosto's words in a different textual location from the original, albeit always within the same stanza. An example of a stanza which is particularly close to the original in terms of rhymes as well as wording is stanza 3:

Piacciavi reformata, e Santa *prole*  
col sangue di Giesù Redentor *nostro*  
d'accettar queste semplici *parole*  
l'humil, et rozo stil del servo *vostro*.  
Di non poter più dirvi assai mi *dole*,  
essendo pover d'op[e]re, e d'*inchiostro*  
né che poco io vi dia, da imputar *sono*  
i versi e 'l cor mio v'offerisco in *dono*.

*Pc* 3

Piacciavi, generosa erculea *prole*,  
ornamento e splendor del secol *nostro*,  
Ippolito, aggradir questo che *vuole*  
e darvi sol può l'umil servo *vostro*.  
Quel ch'io debbo, posso di *parole*  
pagare in parte, e d'opera d'*inchiostro*,  
né che poco io vi dia, da imputar *sono*  
che quanto io posso dar, tutto vi *dono*.

*Of* I, 3

In this stanza Scanello's verses clearly echo Ariosto's, to the extent that one is a direct citation of the *Furioso*: 'né che poco vi dia da imputar sono'. The rhyming words are preserved except for 'vuole', replaced by 'parole', which is brought forward to line 3 and in turn substituted by 'dole' in line 5. This particular stanza is also very close to the source



text in terms of syntactic structure, and consequently the reference to Ariosto's work is particularly recognisable.

On the other hand, after the first three stanzas, in which the source-text is easily recognisable, in most cases Scanello further distances his text from the model, sometimes without referring to it explicitly at all. In his rewriting, only six stanzas do not have any rhyming words in common with Ariosto,<sup>280</sup> and in most of those that do, the presence of Ariosto's words is reduced to very few instances, and often to only one. Moreover, in most cases Scanello moves Ariosto's words from one line to another and frequently inverts their location, such as in the following example:

Con la Superbia alzandosi l'huom vola,  
et con l'Ira poggia nel ciel si *fida*;  
et l'Avaritia d'ogni vitio scola,  
Invidia d'ogni mal principio, e *guida*;  
Accidia, la Lussuria con la *gola*  
ciascuna dal ben far l'uomo diffida;  
le fallaci eresie, che sono tante,  
fanno prevaricar le leggi sante.

*Pc* 50

Pur tra quei boschi il ritrovarsi sola  
le fa pensare di tor costui per *guida*:  
che chi ne l'acqua sta fino a la *gola*,  
ben è ostinato se mercé non grida.  
Se quest'occasione or se l'invola,  
non troverà mai più scorta sì *fida*;  
ch'a lunga prova conosciuto inante  
s'avea quel re fedel sopra ogni amante.

*Of* I, 50

In this stanza, the references to the *Furioso* are reduced to three words which are all displaced in different textual locations: 'guida' is moved to line 4, 'gola' to line 5 and 'fida' to line 2 of *Pc* 50.

Furthermore, these references are framed within a textual and rhetorical structure which is completely distinct from the original one: Ariosto introduces Angelica's decision to approach Sacripante, while Scanello warns about how vices in their personifications tempt humanity. Their occurrence is then not indicative of a reference to the model as a complete narrative or rhetorical structure but it rather shows that Ariosto's stanzas and rhymes function as a reference point in terms of prosody and lexis. The reported stanzas exemplify the two extremes of the relation between the *Primo canto* and *Orlando furioso* with regard to metrics and wording: throughout the text this relation vacillates between a high degree of adherence to Ariosto and a much lower one where the model is sometimes disregarded altogether.<sup>281</sup>

<sup>280</sup> These are *Pc* 9, 15, 26, 39, 45, 54.

<sup>281</sup> Torre also points out textual references to the *Cinque canti*. Torre, 'Orlando santo', pp. 258, 268, 270, 272.

## 5.6 Redirecting Ariosto's narrative from chivalric to religious poetry

The first canto of *Orlando furioso* introduces the subject matter of the whole poem and reconnects it with Boiardo's antecedent. Besides the genealogic and encomiastic theme underpinning the whole poem, the first canto presents the main elements that define the narrative, including first and foremost Orlando's frenzy. The madness of the main character is explicitly connected to unrequited love in a relation of direct causation. Thus, it is clear from the beginning that the force driving Ariosto's story-telling is love understood as the sexual desire for an unattainable object. The vicissitudes and adventures of the characters introduced in this first canto exemplify this dynamic: the fugitive Angelica is desired by the paladins, who all get lost in their amorous quest. After fighting for Angelica, Rinaldo and Ferraù eventually decide to take different paths in their search for the elusive princess; Rinaldo is unhorsed by his horse Baiardo; Ferraù abandons the quest for Angelica in order to find and take possession of Orlando's helmet; Angelica meets Sacripante; Sacripante is beaten by an unrecognised Bradamante; Angelica glimpses the hated Rinaldo from afar and wishes to flee once again.<sup>282</sup>

In terms of content, the comparison with the source text reveals the extent of Scanello's manipulation and ideological distance. Given the programmatic connotation usually characterising a poem's opening stanza and verses, the comparison of Scanello and Ariosto's introductory octaves is particularly indicative of the direction in which the rewriting is going:

Le doglie, i gran martir l'armi, e' rumori  
le crudeltadi, e le ruine, e 'l pianto  
e l'humane discordie, e i grandi errori  
del mondo pazzo e furioso io canto,  
ch' il pastor sommo i re, e gli imperatori  
di risanarlo si potrà dar vanto,  
a quelle unite *l'aiutrice mano*  
d'ogni Signore, et principe christiano.

*Pc*, 1

Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,  
le cortesie, le audaci imprese io canto,  
che furo al tempo che passaro i Mori  
d'Africa il mar, e in Francia nocquer tanto,  
seguendo l'ire e i giovenil furori  
d'Agramante lor re, che si diè vanto  
di vendicar la morte di Troiano  
sopra re Carlo imperator romano.

*OfI*, 1

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<sup>282</sup> Angelica's hate for Rinaldo directly contrasts with the paladin's love for her and originates from the same magical source, as is narrated by Boiardo. The stories of the *Furioso*'s characters intertwine with each other creating complex dynamics of centrifugal and centripetal forces, the core structure over which Ariosto builds his narrative.

The very first words used by Scanello in substitution of Ariosto's clearly point out the rejection of traditional themes of the *Furioso* in favour of a well-defined, religiously-oriented discourse. Ariosto's 'donne' becomes Scanello's 'doglie' and the chivalric elements are removed in favour of religious ones generally referring to human suffering. Ariosto's initial words and phrases are replaced with expressions of opposite meaning: 'cortesie' is turned into the diametrically opposed 'crudeltadi', 'audaci imprese' are 'ruine, e 'l pianto', the former expression underlining audacity and glory and the latter referring to loss and grief. Almost none of Ariosto's original elements are present in Scanello's text. The encomiastic and genealogical theme is absent due to the implicit universality of the religious message and Ariosto's characters are completely omitted, along with their adventures.

Significantly, the only original element that is saved by Scanello is 'l'armi'. This is indicative of the fact that, while not set in a romance world, the main narrative still revolves around a conflict, specifically the war of God and Christian lords against the raving madness of the world. The conflict is fought on two fronts, internal as well as external, since Christians themselves must fight against their own sins and vices. The future tense ('potrà dar vanto'), moreover, indicates the perspective of the narrative, which is transposed to the present, and makes the 'mondo pazzo e furioso' become the contemporary world of his readers, thus setting the conflict in the modern time.<sup>283</sup> Consequently, Scanello does not sing of chivalric heroes pursuing glory and love, but of a very different kind of hero whose heroic deeds are 'opre sante'.

The mention of 'l'armi', moreover, echoes the first verse of Canto I of the *Gerusalemme liberata*:

Canto l'*arme* pietose e 'l Capitano  
che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.  
Molto egli oprò col senno e *con la mano*,  
molto soffrì nel grandioso acquisto;  
e in van l'Inferno vi s'oppose, e in vano  
s'armò d'Asia e di Libia il popol misto.  
il ciel gli diè favor, e sotto ai santi  
segnì ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.

*GI* I, 1

Beside 'l'armi', Scanello evokes Tasso's text more significantly: the phrase 'l'aiutrice mano' referring to Christian princes is an allusion to Tasso ('con la mano'), thus ideally

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<sup>283</sup> Referring to this first octave, Torre observes that 'l'invocazione alla musa è assente, coerentemente col tono più generico dell'intera ottava e con la funzione attualizzante di tale genericità'. Torre, 'Orlando santo' p. 259.

associating Godfrey of Bouillon and his enterprise with contemporary princes and the fight against heresy. Referring to the shift from mad Orlando to the ‘mondo pazzo e furioso’ (*Pc* I), Torre mentions the domestication of the theme of madness.<sup>284</sup> More than simply domesticating Ariosto, however, Scanello preserves the original concept (madness due to loss) by adapting it to the new territory of religious poetry. Scanello makes reference to both the poems of Ariosto and Tasso, which are brought together in the background of a new one: Scanello maintains the concept of madness from the *Furioso* and that of the sacred enterprise from the *Gerusalemme*.

Scanello redefines the kind of heroes who are worthy of praise, heroes who are described only in generic terms as epitomes of justice and morality. The substitution of heroes and main characters with Saints and martyrs is one of the core elements of religious rewritings. Rewriting Petrarch, Malipiero replaced the main character Laura with the Virgin, and rewriting Ariosto, Croce replaced chivalric characters with religious ones.<sup>285</sup> Graziano, completely rejecting the chivalric and courtly aspect of Orlando’s tradition, replaced the chivalric paladin with Saint Orlando, who died fighting for Charlemagne at the battle of Roncevaux Pass.<sup>286</sup> More specific references can nonetheless be found in the following stanzas, where Scanello explicitly mentions contemporary powerful rulers in order to urge them to fight against heresy. Thus, ‘l’Hispano Re’ and ‘il gran Leon del mar’ (*Pc* 20) are mentioned as the main enemies of the Ottoman empire, both looking for vengeance over the actions of the Sultan Selim. The Sultan referenced is likely to be Selim II, who ruled the empire between 1566 and 1574. Furthermore, Spain, including of course the Kingdom of Naples, and the Republic of Venice, whose symbol was the lion of St. Mark,<sup>287</sup> were the major powers of the Holy League that won the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Notably, in the *Furioso* Ariosto also urges contemporary rulers and princes to fight the Turks. In canto XVII, he prompts the Christians to unite and fight the Ottomans in order to retake Jerusalem, making reference especially to the kings of France and Spain and to Pope Leo X. The contemporary horizon of the crusade was then already present in Ariosto’s romance.<sup>288</sup> Scanello’s call for Christian unity and the conquest of Jerusalem, albeit updated to include the Protestant heresy, does not contrast with Ariosto’s poem.

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<sup>284</sup> Torre, ‘Orlando santo...’, p. 259.

<sup>285</sup> ‘Quivi udirete non d’illustri eroi, | di magne imprese far alto apparecchio, | ma spiegar l’aspra morte data a voi, | Signor benigno, per purgar del vecchio | error la colpa, e dar la vita a noi’ *Rc* 4.

<sup>286</sup> *OS* I, 4; I 2. Graziano clearly takes an uncompromising stance on the contentious credibility of *Orlando furioso*.

<sup>287</sup> Also Ariosto called Venice ‘leon del mar’ (*Of* XXXIII, 46, 6).

<sup>288</sup> Jo Ann Cavallo, *The World Beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 173-175.

In *Orlando furioso*, the war between Charlemagne and the Saracens provides the background for the maze of adventures in which each character is trapped. The difference of faith does not hinder the sharing of a chivalric code by Christians and non-Christians alike, also indicated by the fact that the commentators of Ariosto praised Christian as well as non-Christian characters, as Maria Pavlova has pointed out.<sup>289</sup> The plots and stories which stand out from this background are usually about individual heroic deeds and adventures, such as Orlando's travels in his quest for Angelica. Within the perspective of religious poetry, however, this heroic individualism cannot be preserved as it irremediably clashes with the universality claimed by the Christian faith, a notion which needed to be reinforced at the time of the Counter-Reformation. Thus, in Scanello the conflict between Christians and infidels, who now include heretics as well, becomes the central issue while individual heroes are completely absent from the narrative. The position occupied by Charlemagne in *Orlando furioso* is strategically replaced with 'ogni Signore e Principe christiano' and the dedicatee of the poem is not a specific dynasty but the 'Reformata e Santa prole'. Scanello, then, salvages two core elements from his source, the theme of frenzy and that of religious conflict. The two themes are connected, as Scanello proposes the conquest of Christ's tomb as the act that can restore the world to its original state of purity.

### 5.7 Madness, vices, and heresy

As has been mentioned, the most important thematic unit still revolves around human madness, which is the core of Ariosto's poem. Scanello builds his rewriting on the core narrative structure of the human loss of sanity and the quest to retrieve it. Within the universalistic perspective of religious poetry, though, the individual frenzy of the paladin Orlando becomes representative of the contemporary human condition. The war against the moral madness of the world takes the form of the fight of generic Christian heroes and contemporary rulers against heresy as well as their own vices in the first part while God, Satan, Adam and Eve replace Ariosto's errant knights in the second, more narrative part. As per tradition, the menaces threatening Christians are represented as actual beings of monstrous nature: 'Orca' (7), 'nuovo Fitone' (9), 'bestia abominosa, et fella' (10), 'basilisco' (12), 'mostro crudel' (13). These monsters are personifications of vices, which

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<sup>289</sup> Maria Pavlova, 'Ludovico Ariosto', in *Christian Muslim relations: a Bibliographical History*, ed. by David Thomas and others, 11 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2009-), VI, pp. 369-483. Pavlova provides a concise overview on the debated issue of the portrayal of Muslims and the Muslim world in the *Furioso*.

are also depicted as a blood-thirsty beast preying on the people. While such personifications of vices were a common poetical device, some of Scanello's verses also bring to mind another passage of Ariosto's romance:

La povera, et vil plebe meschinella  
non ha oggimai dove si porre il piede  
perché la bestia abominosa, e fella  
la perseguita ogn'or senza mercede.  
E quale il lupo suol far dell'agnella,  
tal de l'umana gente far si vede  
che l'empio mostro con gran fellonia  
or quinci, or quindi le dà morte ria.

S' il terrazan, s' il civil stato infesta  
questo mostro crudel, più ch' altro crudo,  
che deve fare le vil plebe mesta?  
Et al stuol pastoral inerme e ignudo  
che giace alla campagna, a la foresta  
rocche, e fortezze non gli sono scudo,  
altro non han con che al nemico opporsi,  
se non con calci, con pugni, e con morsi.

Poi che tutta la plebe averà priva  
di vita la crudel besta sfrenata,  
pensate forse che la lassi viva  
la nobiltà, e gente segnalata,  
et ch' ella sia del dominare schiva?  
Certo vana sarà simil pensata,  
che a maggior regni questa bestia fella  
con sua gran tirannia sarà ribella.

*Pc* 10-11, 15

Quivi una bestia uscir de la foresta  
parea, di crudel vista, odiosa e brutta,  
ch'avea l'orecchie d'asino, e la testa  
di lupo e i denti, e per gran fame asciutta:  
branche avea di leon; l'altro che resta,  
tutto era volpe: e pareva scorrer tutta  
e Francia e Italia e Spagna et Inghilterra,  
l'Europa e l'Asia, e al fin tutta la terra.

Per tutto avea genti ferite e morte,  
la bassa plebe e i più superbi capi:  
anzi nuocer pareva molto più forte  
a re, a signori, a principi, a satrapi.  
Peggio facea ne la romana corte,  
che v'avea uccisi cardinali e papi  
contaminato avea la bella sede  
di Pietro, e messo scandol ne la fede.

Par che dinanzi a questa bestia orrenda  
cada ogni muro, ogni ripar che tocca.  
Non si vede città che si difenda:  
se l'apre incontra ogni castello e rocca.  
Par che agli onor divini anco s'estenda,  
e sia adorata da la gente sciocca,  
e che le chiavi s'arroggi d'avere  
del cielo e de l'abisso in suo potere.

*Of* XXVI, 31-33

In stanzas 10-15, Scanello describes figuratively the monster of vice as a beast attacking helpless villagers and peoples and causing utter devastation and ruin while following its instincts blindly: ('Scorre il Mostro crudel a briglia sciolta | di quà di là, dove il desio lo caccia' (*Pc* 13, 1-2). The villagers are represented as vulnerable and passive and even the ruling classes cannot hope to avoid the attack of the beast. In canto XXVI of *Orlando furioso*, Ariosto describes an allegorical beast causing ruin and death to people as well as threatening lords and princes. More specifically, he is describing a group of marble statues that represent the fight between a beast and three knights aided by a lion. Through the literary device of prophecy ex-post with an encomiastic purpose, Ariosto makes it clear that the sculptures, which decorate one of Merlin's springs, refer to a future time, as the depicted characters will live seven centuries into the future. Merlin's statues depict allegorically the fight between avarice and five rulers contemporary to Ariosto's time,

namely Francis I of France, Maximilian I of Habsburg, Emperor Charles V, Henry VIII of England and Pope Leo X, alluded to as a lion. By representing these rulers as eventually victorious over the beast of avarice, Ariosto praises their generosity, in particular that of Francis I. Allegorical representations of vices as monstrous beings are a common *topos* in Italian poetry, starting with Dante's 'lupa', and Scanello's vices are clearly not Ariosto's avarice. Nonetheless, Scanello's readership was supposed to be familiar enough with Ariosto's romance to appreciate his rewriting operation, so that it is very likely that readers, keeping in mind *Orlando furioso* as a main reference, would associate the depictions of two allegorical monsters, Scanello's 'bestia abominosa, et fella' and Ariosto's 'bestia orrenda', preying on the defenceless people and fighting against great Christian rulers.

The beasts depicted by Ariosto and Scanello are both extremely powerful and prey upon poor peasants who are completely unable to defend themselves, as no fortress or walls are strong enough to stop the monster. They are not satisfied by simply attacking the people but also rebel against their rulers. In the *Furioso*, Ariosto's allegory of avarice then turns to praise the King of France and is specifically connected to historical events that deeply affected Italian politics and consequently the courtier Ariosto. More importantly, behind Ariosto's encomiastic praise there is a thinly-veiled critique of the courts of his time that significantly includes Rome as well. Indeed, Rome is the one that suffers the most, to the point that the heart of Christendom itself is contaminated by the vice of avarice. This statement is then counterposed by the representation of Pope Leo X as a decisive force in the battle against the monstrous beast. Since the corruption of avarice has reached the core of the Christian faith, the Pope's victory over it may be interpreted as Ariosto's hope for a reform of the Church. Referring to this prophecy, Juan Carlos D'Amico has noted that, while the peasants appear as completely passive objects, European rulers are represented fighting against humanity's vices and corruption as instruments of justice, and Pope Leo X in particular appears to be the one capable of renovating the Catholic Church and ending its corruption, a poetic image reflecting Ariosto's aristocratic and monarchic position.<sup>290</sup>

Scanello's ideological and political outlook could not be more different from the one described by D'Amico. Not only does Scanello's allegory serve a different purpose altogether but this purpose is also openly critical of the worldview underpinning *Orlando*

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<sup>290</sup> Juan Carlos D'Amico, 'Bradamante, Ruggiero e le false profezie nel *Furioso*', *Chroniques Italiennes*, 19.1 (2011) <<http://chroniquesitaliennes.univ-paris3.fr/PDF/web19/Damicoweb19.pdf>> [accessed 16 March 2016] (p. 10).

*furioso*. European leaders are themselves nameless victims and the only salvation resides in the intervention of God invoked by the poet: ‘Rompete voi Signor le dure morse | de l’homicidial mostro, empio e ribaldo’ (*Pc* 16). In the subsequent stanzas, moreover, the attack on capital vices is associated with the attack against heresy and Islam. The furious beast can be tamed and redeemed by halting its attack on Catholic Christians and turning it against the Protestant heresy as well as Islam:

Vero ufficio farai da buon christiano,  
del mal pentito, e al ben sarai ridotto  
se là n’andrai con la tua armata mano,  
contro il gran Turco, e contra l’ugonotto;  
per la Chiesa acquistando il monte, e il  
piano  
sarai da Dio al fin nel ciel condotto  
per la fede operando in ogni loco  
armi, ingegno, valor, metalli e foco.

Poi che s’affaticar gran pezzo invano  
i duo guerrier per por l’un l’altro sotto,  
quando non meno era con l’arme in mano  
questo di quel, né quel di questo dotto;  
fu primiero il signor di Montalbano,  
ch’al cavallier di Spagna fece motto,  
sì come quel ch’ ha nel cuor tanto fuoco,  
che tutto n’arde e non ritrova loco.

*Of* I, 18

*Pc* 18

Muslims and Protestants are identified as one indefinite enemy of Christianity. The differences between the Ottoman Empire and the Huguenots are nullified, as the only relevant factor is the nonconformity to the Roman Church and the tenets of Trent, which is part of the error which makes ‘il mondo pazzo e furioso’.

This stanza coincides with *Of* I, 18, where Ariosto writes of Rinaldo’s decision to address Ferraù. The poet’s urging the beast of vices to turn its attack towards the enemy of Christianity coincides with the Christian paladin’s decision to start a dialogue with his Saracen adversary. In both Scanello and Ariosto the main action, a conflict, changes direction: the beast stops its attack against Christians in order to pursue the true enemies of Christianity and Rinaldo and Ferraù cease to fight each other to chase after the object of their desire. In *Orlando furioso*, the episode shows in particular how the two adversaries, despite the different religious faith, share a moral code of conduct that allows them to put their differences aside in view of a shared purpose. At the same time, though, it shows also that the motivation driving Rinaldo and Ferraù is not religious or ethical but of an amorous, individualistic and opportunistic nature. Since Scanello rejects Ariosto’s original worldview in favour of a clear and unbridgeable distinction between Christian and non-Christians, he does not simply change this passage but overturns it. Ariosto’s famous praise of the knights of old is thus rewritten:



Non gite invano per li golfi obliqui  
de' nostri mali in mille error sommersi,  
andate tutti là contra gl'iniqui  
turchi, mori, marrani, sciti, e persi;  
udite de moderni, e de gli antiqui  
poveri schiavi supplichevol versi  
ivi espugnatte ogni nemica riva,  
e riscattate la gente cattiva.

*Pc 22*

Oh gran bontà de' cavalieri antiqui!  
Eran rivali, eran di fé diversi,  
e si sentian de gli aspri colpi iniqui  
per tutta la persona anco dolersi;  
e pur per selve oscure e calli obliqui  
insieme van senza sospetto aversi.  
Da quattro sproni il destrier punto arriva  
ove una strada in due si dipartiva.

*Of I, 22*

Significantly, where Ariosto's heroes find a crossroads, Scanello's find a clear and unifying purpose, the liberation of their fellow Christians. In the previous stanzas, the temporary truce of Rinaldo and Ferraù has been associated with the change of direction of the allegorical beast: while the former was dictated by opportunity, the latter was represented as a righteous moral act that could grant salvation. The dynamics underlying these passages are illustrative of the conflicting relationship with the model, which is implicitly rejected as negative but whose narrative mechanisms nonetheless permeate the new discourse.

### **5.8 A new crusade as atonement for the madness of original sin**

As the criticism of the traditional chivalric worldview championed by Ariosto turns into a call to fight heresy, the war against Muslims in particular is to be seen as a new crusade, which replicates the holy enterprise of Godfrey of Bouillon:

Non comportate che la meza luna  
rubi d'Italia hor questa spiaggia, hor quella,  
poi che per voi ogni signor raduna  
arme, tesoro, e gente d'arte bella,  
e non vi manca homai più cosa alcuna,  
per mettervi all'impresa santa e bella  
che'l buon Gofredi già sopra se volse,  
e 'l sepolcro di Christo a i can ritolse.

*Pc 23*

The reference to Godfrey of Bouillon also implicitly reminds the audience of the popular epic dedicated to Godfrey's deeds, Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, and further reinforces

the rejection of romance wandering. It is significant that Scanello reminds the Christian audience of the true direction their action should take in correspondence with the separation of Ferraù and Rinaldo and with the Saracen's loss of sense of direction: '[p]el bosco Ferraù molto s'avvolse | e ritrovossi al fine onde si tolse' (*Of* I, 23, 7-8). More importantly, moreover, the invocation of the crusade is incorporated within the ideological viewpoint underpinning the new narrative as the solution to the madness affecting the poet's contemporary world. It is by retaking the Holy Sepulchre that humanity will be able to go back to its pristine state, to the Edenic state before the moral aberration caused by original sin.

As anticipated, conquering the Holy land is a way for humanity to atone for Satan's temptation, exemplified by Eve's acceptance of the forbidden fruit, and the narrative core of the poem revolves around the biblical episode of the Fall (stanzas 27-78). While in Ariosto Sacripante meets Angelica, in Scanello Eve meets and is corrupted by the serpent. The comparison between virginity and the rose is, then, implicitly associated with Eve's acceptance of the apple:

Disse la donna, 'In questa pianta ascosa  
e d'empia morte la pungente spina,  
perché fors' è mortale, et velenosa,  
che l'ha vietata la bontà divina'.  
Rispose allhor Lucifro 'E non è cosa  
mala, anzi a farvi dei già vi destina:  
però vi disse Dio, non ne mangiate,  
acciò ch' a lui eguali voi non siate'.

Sì che la donna dal vietato stelo  
colse quel pomo dal suo ceppo verde;  
et fè mangiare all'huomo di quel melo  
per cui lo stato d'innocenza perde.  
Come tolto gli fu l'immortal velo,  
e si conobbe della vita al verde  
egro mortale peccatore errante  
povero, e nudo dal capo a le piante.

*Pc* 42-43

La verginella è simile alla rosa,  
ch'in bel giardin su la nativa spina  
mentre sola e sicura si riposa,  
nè gregge nè pastor se le avvicina  
l'aura soave e l'alba rugiadosa,  
l'acqua, la terra al suo favor s'inchina:  
gioveni vaghi e donne innamorate  
amano averne e seni e tempie ornate.

Ma non sì tosto dal materno stelo  
rimossa viene e dal suo ceppo verde,  
che quanto avea dagli uomini e dal cielo  
favor, grazia e bellezza, tutto perde.  
La vergine ch' 'l fior, di che più zelo  
che de' begli occhi e de la vita aver de',  
lascia altrui corre, il pregio ch'avea inanti  
perde nel cor di tutti gli altri amanti.

*Of* I, 42-43

Seizing the rose is compared with seizing the forbidden apple: as the loss of virginity diminishes the value of a woman in the eyes of her lovers, so the loss of human innocence reduces the human condition from blessed to a sinful and mortal one. As observed by Torre, the association of the images of the rose and the apple, lost virginity and sin, Angelica and Eve, implies that the negative moral judgement bestowed on one is to be applied to the other too: the temptress Angelica becomes a signifier for both Lucifer

tempting Eve and Eve tempting Adam, and condemning her means also condemning the narrative centering around her, since she represents the driving force underpinning Ariosto's romance world and can therefore be considered the metaphorical symbol of the poet's worldview.<sup>291</sup>

Significantly, Adam and Eve's act of defiance against God is presented as an act of madness:

Fu Signor questa la prima pazzia,  
che fece il mondo giovinetto, e infante,  
il qual poi si crebbe in tanta frenesia,  
che stette pazzo, e furioso errante  
per fin ch'il Verbo eterno il ver Messia  
le risanò con le sue leggi sante:  
che danno il ciel a giusti, e falsi, a rei  
danno l'inferno in sempiterni homei.

*Pc 45*

From Scanello's perspective, the sin of Adam and Eve caused the raging moral madness of the world and, despite the divine intervention of a Saviour, only the unity of Christians against heretics and Muslims, and in particular the retaking of Jerusalem, can redeem humanity from the consequences of the Fall. It is clear that Scanello's entire narrative revolves around the concept of madness interpreted in a biblically moral way. While Ariosto's narrative is based on restoring the self of an individual, Scanello's is based on restoring a collective moral sanity. In *Orlando furioso*, Orlando's unrequited love for Angelica causes him to lose his wits; in Scanello, Adam and Eve's disobedience to God is the reason for humanity's condition of moral corruption.

Notably, Orlando's loss of wits is already represented as providential in *Orlando furioso*. In canto XXXIV Astolfo meets Saint John in the Earthly Paradise and learns that Orlando was punished by God because of his love for a pagan woman: 'Sappi che' l vostro Orlando, perchè torse | dal camin dritto le commesse insegne, | è punito da Dio, che più s'accende | contra chi egli ama più, quando si offende' (*Of* XXXIV, 62). God gifted Orlando with extraordinary vigour 'a difesa di sua santa fede' (*Of* XXXIV, 63, 5) but the paladin abandoned the Christian army for 'l'incesto amore d'una pagana' (*Of* XXXIV, 64, 6). Orlando's madness is God's punishment for his desertion and Astolfo is allowed to cure him only because God established a fixed duration for Orlando's punishment. Orlando's madness and Astolfo's mission on the Moon are providential

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<sup>291</sup> Torre, 'Orlando santo', pp. 268-271.

divine acts. Scanello then adapts Ariosto's notion of madness as divine punishment to a new religious discourse that simultaneously criticises his romance worldview.

### 5.9 The ambiguous dynamics of Angelica's role

So far we have seen how Angelica, and the romance wandering she especially embodies, is condemned by Scanello through her association with Satan and Eve. However, the complex dynamics of her role within the narrative fabric of the *Furioso* is reflected in Scanello's rewriting, and transpires from the beginning of the poem. Developed in the narration of the episode of Adam and Eve, the notion of profane love as morally wrong is anticipated in the first stanzas, when Scanello associates Orlando's loss of Angelica at the hands of Charlemagne with Satan's loss of the world at the hands of God:

[...]

La caritate aspettano da voi  
ogni cittade, ogni villa, et ogni terra;  
e speran che più l'orca non gl'ingoi  
né le divori, e le ruini a terra.  
Oh fortunati voi christiani heroi  
che fate ad ogni vitio mortal guerra  
con l'esempio di quel che 'l mondo sciolse  
da lacci tutto, et a Satan lo tolse.

*Pc 7*

che vi fu tolta la sua donna poi  
ecco il giudicio umano come spesso erra!  
Quella che dagli esperii ai liti eoi  
avea difesa con sì lunga guerra,  
or tolta gli è tra tanti amici suoi  
senza spada adoprar, ne la sua terra.  
Il sacro imperator, ch'estingue volse  
un grave incendio, fu che gliela tolse.

*Of I, 7*

Charlemagne took from Orlando his object of desire in order to avoid an internal conflict: this act is implicitly likened to God taking from Satan the world, the object of desire of the fallen angel. Orlando's amorous desire for Angelica is compared to Satan's ambition for world domination; both desires are harmful albeit for different reasons. In the case of Orlando, love is a distraction from his duties as a Christian knight, and in the case of Satan his victory means the final condemnation of humanity. In both cases, dire consequences derive from the desire for an object that is therefore taken by a powerful entity representing the moral and religious good.

While Angelica plays a clearly active and negative role as she is associated with Eve and Lucifer in the episode of the Fall, as an object of desire snatched from the hands of the character who most desires it she is a mere passive object, devoid of any agency. The representation of Angelica's narrative role in Scanello's poem is ambiguous rather than one-dimensional. Besides being a passive object of desire and a temptress, Angelica is

also implicitly associated with the people fleeing from the allegorical beast representing vices. In Ariosto's *Of I*, stanzas 10-13 describe Angelica's escape from Charlemagne's camp after the defeat of the Christians, her flight from Rinaldo and her eventual meeting with Ferraù. The corresponding stanzas of Scanello's rewriting deal with the attack of the allegorical beast on the villagers previously discussed. Referring to the helpless villagers, 'the phrase 'vil pastorello e timido villano' (*Pc* 12) echoes Ariosto's comparison of Angelica with a shepherdess in *Of I* 11, 5-6: 'Timida pastorella mai sì presta | non volse piede inanzi a serpe crudo'. Since Angelica's flight from the Christian camp is associated with the defenceless people who are trying to escape the beast, she is implicitly acknowledged as harmless and innocent prey herself. The definition of the paesants as 'agnella' has a similar effect:

[...]  
 E quale il lupo suol far dell'agnella,  
 tal de l'humana gente far si vede  
 che l'empio mostro con gran fellonia  
 hor quinci, hor quindi le dà morte ria.

*Pc* 10

Humans are helpless against the beast, as a lamb is against a wolf. While this image is a common poetic *topos* and also has religious connotations due to the traditional representation of God as a shepherd, it is noteworthy that in *Orlando furioso* only two characters are compared to lambs, namely Angelica and Isabella. Isabella's situation is defined as that of a lamb entrusted to a wolf: 'era Odorico il Biscaglin, che posto | fu come lupo a guardia de l'agnella' (*Of* XXIV, 16, 3-4). The princess of Cathay is compared to a lamb lost in dark woods and crying for help in Orlando's lament in canto VIII ('riman tra' boschi la smarrita agnella' *Of* VIII, 76, 4). The passive victimhood of the people and of Angelica is then amplified by the use of a metaphor associated with two heroines of the *Furioso* whose virtue is threatened by the maleficence of men and whose passivity is distinctly expressed.

However, after the implicit identification of Angelica as a passive victim, Scanello reverses the rewriting mechanism and associates Angelica with the monster slaughtering defenceless people while roaming the world. In the *Furioso*, Angelica is depicted as wandering without any specific direction, while the corresponding stanza in Scanello describes the wandering of the allegorical beast:

Scorre il mostro crudel *a briglia sciolta*  
*di quà di là, dove il desio lo caccia*  
 sempre occidendo molta gente, e molta  
 seco n'alletta a seguitar sua traccia.  
 Tanta superbia ha quel crudel raccolta  
 che Dio e 'santi su nel ciel minaccia,  
 d'humana spetie la superba fiera  
 va depredando il mondo a schiera a  
 schiera.

*Pc 13*

La donna il palafreno a dietro volta,  
 e per la selva a tutta briglia il caccia;  
 né per la rara più che per la folta,  
 la più sicura e miglior via procaccia:  
 ma pallida, tremando, e di sè tolta,  
 lascia cura al destrier che la via faccia.  
 Di su di giù, ne l'alta selva fiera  
 tanto girò, che venne a una riviera.

*Of I, 13*

Here the concept of wandering is not connected to the victim but to the attacker: it is the bloodthirsty beast that roams the world without direction and following only its own whims, as highlighted in the text. As Angelica wanders without destination, so does the beast, driven only by impulse. Thus, indirectly, Angelica takes on a more active connotation as well as a negative one. Scanello's juxtaposition of the elusive princess with the allegory of vice does not simply cast a negative light on Angelica but also implicitly suggests the revision of her role in Ariosto's narrative while reflecting its ambiguity. Angelica's narrative role is clearly not one-dimensional: she is a passive object of desire, a passive victim, an allegorical beast, the tempted Eve as well as the tempting Satan. The problematic nature of the character Angelica is then not simply reduced to a moral signifier of sin. Rather, Scanello appropriates it at a deeper, and maybe subconscious, narrative level. The presence of the problematic princess of Cathay escapes a rigid redefinition even in a strongly religiously oriented discourse. Even as the ultimate symbol of Ariosto's romance worldview, her multiple and contrasting facets subtly resurface through the narrative mechanisms of Scanello's rewriting.

The religious rewritings of profane works rested on the prestige of the works they aimed to subvert. This is the paradox of parody highlighted by Hutcheon, who considers parody a particular subset of adaptation: as its transgression is authorised by the norm it targets critically, by imitating parody reinforces.<sup>292</sup> The adaptation of Ariosto's concept of madness goes beyond the mere refunctioning that grounds this kind of rewriting. Scanello incorporates the core of Ariosto's narrative in a new poem that is the synthesis of two contrasting discourses. Significantly, the religious discourse echoes Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, the Christian epic with which Ariosto's romance was often

<sup>292</sup> Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: the Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000) [reprint. *A Theory of Parody: the Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (London: Methuen, 1985)], p. 26. On parody as adaptation see *A Theory of Adaptation*, p. 170.

contrasted. Thus, the *Primo canto* negotiates between Ariosto and Tasso aligning the former with Counter-Reformation values and rendering it suitable for a Reformed Catholic audience. The poems of Tasso and, more importantly, Ariosto remain in the background of Scanello's text. By inscribing the foundational narrative of the work it aims to subvert, the *Primo canto* ensures its permanence. The narrative turns of Ariosto reflected in the new poem also testify to the complex underlying permanence of the romance.

Furthermore, as it transforms and subverts *Orlando furioso* by integrating its text, the *Primo canto* acts as a commentary on Ariosto's poem and prompts the reader to relate the past, represented by Ariosto, to the present, represented by Scanello. Canto I of the *Furioso* introduces the poet's literary programme and romance worldview, establishing the foundations of his narrative and laying out its main directions. Rewriting the first canto, then, also implies the reinterpretation and revision of the literary, cultural and ideological foundations of the entire poem. While the romance and erotic elements, represented by Angelica, are demonised and condemned by Scanello, the *Primo canto* invites readers to revise Ariosto in relation to the issues that are put into the foreground: the religious conflict, the crusade and original sin. Ariosto's poem is redeemed and rendered useful as vehicle for a new religious and moralising message. Significantly, as will be seen in Part Five, Vincenzo Marino, too, maintains Ariosto's notion of madness and incorporates it within his argumentation.

The *Primo Canto dell'Ariosto tradotto in rime spirituali* is a coherent rewriting of canto I of *Orlando furioso* that acts both as a critical commentary and as a contemporary counterpart to the source-text. By associating Orlando's love to original sin Scanello does not simply censure Ariosto's worldview but rather invites readers to reread and reinterpret *Orlando furioso* from a perspective of religious universality. Moreover, as we have seen, by representing the conquest of Jerusalem as the cure to the world's condition of madness, as Astolfo's trip to the moon saves Orlando from his frenzy, Scanello implicitly connects the romance world of *Orlando furioso* with the epic world of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*. At the very same moment when Ariosto's poem is subject to increasing criticism and censorship, *Orlando furioso* penetrates other genres and ideologies in contrast to its original character. This is particularly relevant as it happens in an area and period not usually considered particularly receptive to Ariosto's chivalric romance because of factors including religious cultural control and the immediate preference accorded to Tasso. Like Filippi, Scanello invites the reader to return to and re-envision *Orlando furioso*. As an adaptation offering a revised viewpoint, Filippi's *Lettere* also offer a

critical commentary on Ariosto and particularly his characters, as seen in Part Two. Scanello approaches Ariosto from a critical standpoint too but his position towards the romance is more ideologically critical and his rewriting both criticises and incorporates the text it targets.

Parts Two and Three have focussed on the Neapolitan cultural background. Parts Four and Five will move on to consider the Sicilian context: Part Four investigates the dissemination of the *Furioso* in Sicily from the 1530s to the end of the Cinquecento, and Part Five explores a religious rewriting by a Sicilian priest that approaches the *Furioso* from an extremely critical stance and explicitly aims at effacing Ariosto.



## PART FOUR. THE DISSEMINATION OF *ORLANDO FURIOSO* ACROSS GENRES AND CONTEXTS: THE CASE OF SICILY

### 6. THE CASE OF SICILY.

#### 6.1 *Orlando furioso* in Sicily

In Parts Two and Three we have seen how Ariosto's poem was disseminated in a collection of Ovidian epistles and a religious rewriting which exhibit a close and sustained relation with the source text, albeit in very different ways. In this Part I will analyse the episodic presence of *Orlando furioso* across a variety of literary genres and contexts in which it is displayed to very different degrees, and sometimes disguised and disowned, as Ariosto's romance penetrates new genres and media ranging from court music to sacred poems. With regard to the dissemination of the *Furioso* in new literary and cultural domains, the case of Sicily is particularly interesting because, while the island lacked an indigenous chivalric romance tradition, references to characters, episodes, images and figures of *Orlando furioso* can be found in a variety of Sicilian literary experiences and contexts. While Ariosto's romance was never printed on the island and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* crucially influenced Sicilian epic production, the evidence that will be considered points to the popularity and dissemination of the *Furioso*.

Surprisingly, the reception of the poem in Sicily has never been specifically addressed, either in scholarship on Sicilian literary culture or the reception of the *Furioso*. Sixteenth-century Sicilian culture has, in fact, often been overlooked by critics, despite scholarly interest for lyric poetry, the history of madrigals, and the tradition of the *Teatro dei Pupi*, a form of theatrical representation based on the characters of the humanistic romance tradition that developed especially in the nineteenth century.<sup>293</sup> A complementary aim of

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<sup>293</sup> More recently, scholarly interest has focussed on Sicilian poetry and academies. I refer in particular to the contributions of Irene Bagni and Salvatore Bottari, both in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700: Networks of Culture, Innovation and Dissent*, ed. by Jane E. Everson, Denis V. Reidy and Lisa Sampson (Cambridge: Legenda, 2016): Irene Bagni, 'L'Accademia Palermitana degli Accesi: un esempio di petrarchismo nel

this Part is, therefore, that of reconstructing the reception of the *Furioso* in Sicily. Examining the case of Sicily will highlight not only how dissemination and reception are processes that rely on each other, but also the dynamics underpinning both the dislodgement of the *Furioso* from its romance roots and its penetration into a new cultural background.

In reconstructing the Sicilian reception of Ariosto in the Cinquecento, I will focus on different social contexts such as courts and academies, and different literary genres, such as lyric poetry and hagiography. As it traces the reception of *Orlando furioso* throughout the century, my investigation begins by going back to an earlier period than has so far been discussed. My analysis seeks to establish the extent of the presence of Ariosto's romance in the Sicilian cultural outlook as well as its continuity before and after the publication of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, that is, within a context characterised by distinguishing cultural and literary features. My final aim is to demonstrate the continuous presence of the *Furioso* and simultaneously its transformation, that is, its restatement through adaptation and change.

The literary history of Cinquecento Sicily has attracted less scholarly interest than that of Naples. While the Kingdom of Naples was an important setting in the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle* and its cultural relevance has therefore been addressed in academic scholarship, the Sicilian context has received little or no critical attention in this regard. Sharing a similar political situation, the Kingdom of Sicily was a constituent of the Spanish empire ruled by a Viceroy; however, unlike Naples, the Kingdom of Sicily had been ruled by the Aragonese since the fourteenth century. Furthermore, while successfully rejected by Naples, the Spanish Inquisition had been established on the island since the late Quattrocento.<sup>294</sup> More importantly, the history of Sicily set the island apart from the Italian peninsula in cultural terms, particularly with regard to its long-standing literary tradition in dialect.<sup>295</sup> In terms of literary culture, in fact, Sicily distinguished itself from mainland Italy especially due to tradition of the Sicilian School, the group of poets who gravitated around the Hohenstaufen court (1166-1266). This impacted upon the Cinquecento debate on the *questione della lingua* in Sicily and inspired a literary production in Sicilian that was parallel to the one in Italian.

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tardo Cinquecento', pp. 233–44; Salvatore Bottari, 'The Accademia della Fucina: Culture and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Messina', pp. 77-87.

<sup>294</sup> Vito La Mantia, *Storia dell'Inquisizione in Sicilia* (Palermo: Sellerio, 1977), pp. 26, 36.

<sup>295</sup> By Sicilian dialect I refer to the Sicilian literary language, whose tradition dates back to the Sicilian School. In contemporary scholarship the term dialect is often used to differentiate between regional languages and Florentine-based Italian, which was codified by Bembo in the Cinquecento.

Considering the distinctiveness of the Sicilian cultural outlook, my discussion begins with an evaluation of the scholarship on the history and culture of Cinquecento Sicily with the aim to underline its original features. Within this frame, I will then proceed to discuss the reception of *Orlando furioso* throughout the century by exploring a number of cases in which it is referenced. Such occurrences cross places, genres, linguistic and, in one case, even visual boundaries, and provide essential evidence in terms of the reception and dissemination of Ariosto's romance. Particular attention will then be given to: Sigismondo Paolucci's encomiastic poem *Notte d'Aphrica* (1535); the madrigals of Giandomenico Martoretta (1548 and 1552), Pietro Havente (1556) and Salvatore di Cataldo (1559); Paolo Caggio's dialogue *Iconomica* (1552); a mysterious series of drawings representing episodes from the *Furioso* in a bureaucratic document; Giuseppe Cumia's Petrarchan *Rime* (1562); Marco Filippi's hagiographic poem *Vita di Santa Caterina* (1562); Antonio Veneziano's Petrarchan collection *Celia*, and his burlesque poems *Puttanismu* and *Cornaria* (1580s), all of which are written in Sicilian. My discussion culminates in Vincenzo Marino's religious re-envisioning, his *Furioso spirituale* (1596), a hitherto almost unknown source that is explored at length in Part Four. My aim is to demonstrate the extent to which *Orlando furioso* was appropriated by Sicilian literary culture and how, through a singular process of adaptation, it penetrated different genres and cultural domains.

## 6.2 A critical overview of Sicilian culture in the sixteenth century

Subject to the Aragonese crown since the fourteenth century and a Spanish dependency from 1516, the Kingdom of Sicily was characterised by a historical development process that distinguished it from the Italian mainland states, as noted. As a member of the Spanish empire, it shared similar political features with the Kingdom of Naples, and the rulers of Sicily and Naples were also sometimes connected: Ugo of Moncada, for instance, was Viceroy of Sicily from 1509 to 1518 and lieutenant of Naples between 1527 and 1528, before the appointment of the new viceroy.<sup>296</sup> As in the case of Naples, the importance of Sicily lay in its strategic position in the Mediterranean against Barbary incursions and Ottoman invasions. In her analysis of Sicilian military development during the reign of Philip II, Valentina Favarò has discussed how military conflict shaped the history of the island during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries pointing out that the

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<sup>296</sup> For the biography of Ugo Moncada see Nicoletta Bazzano, 'Moncada, Ugo', in *DBI*, LXXV (2011) pp. 578-584.

modern process of militarisation of Sicily, logistically destined to become the last outpost of Christianity, was the result of a war of religion as well as of cultural, political and economic supremacy in the Mediterranean.<sup>297</sup> With regard to internal strife, on the other hand, Rossella Cancila has underlined that, after the tumultuous revolt of 1516 and the crisis of the 1520s, the only major social conflict in the Cinquecento was a popular riot in Palermo in 1560, which was characterised by a limited local dimension and by the support of the aristocracy for the government.<sup>298</sup>

Unlike Naples, however, Sicily was characterised by a multiplicity of important cultural centres, as mentioned in the Introduction. While Palermo remained the capital city and main publishing centre, Messina was its rival in economic terms as well as an important publishing centre; by 1596, moreover, the second Sicilian university was officially established in Messina.<sup>299</sup> Until then, in fact, Catania had been the seat of the only University in Sicily. It is noteworthy, however, that despite the presence of the University, no works were printed in Catania, with the exception of a period of a few years in the 1560s, when the jurist and poet Giuseppe Cumia (1531-1589 ca) established his printshop there, thus becoming the first to introduce the printing press in the city. As will be seen in chapter 9, Cumia founded his typography in order to print his poems.

Another important factor differentiating Sicily from Naples, as noted, was the presence of the Spanish Inquisition. Academic literature has highlighted the significant role of the Spanish Inquisition in Sicilian culture and in the process of integration of the Sicilian aristocracy within the Spanish institutions, despite initial hostility from the local aristocracy towards it.<sup>300</sup> The history of the Spanish Inquisition in Sicily has attracted scholarly interest because of the extent of its cultural and political impact as well as its geographic and temporal extension (it was abolished in the eighteenth century). Among recent contributions, William Monter's investigation of the activity of the Spanish inquisition in some of the territories of the Spanish empire shows that the Holy Office did not only aim to preserve religious orthodoxy by preventing and punishing religious dissent, but also provided the means through which Spanish nobility could gain a renewed

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<sup>297</sup> Valentina Favarò, *La modernizzazione militare nella Sicilia di Filippo II*, Quaderni di Mediterranea, 10 (Palermo: Associazione Mediterranea, 2009), see particularly pp. 22-23.

<sup>298</sup> Rossella Cancila, 'Congiure e rivolte nella Sicilia del Cinquecento', *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche*, 9 (2007), 47-62.

<sup>299</sup> On the foundation of the University of Messina, which was complicated by a conflict with the rival University of Catania as well as internal disputes, see Paul F. Grendler, *The Jesuits and Italian Universities 1548-1773* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017), pp. 37-89.

<sup>300</sup> On the hostility of Sicilians I refer to Cancila, 'Congiure e Rivolte'.

position of privilege: the institution of familiars.<sup>301</sup> Local noblemen who were appointed by Inquisitors as lay familiars, defined by Monter as ‘basic salaried support staff’,<sup>302</sup> enjoyed particular privileges, such as immunity from arrest and prosecution by royal authorities; their condition was, therefore, a cause of jurisdictional quarrels between the Inquisition on the one hand and the Viceroy and the Sicilian parliament on the other.<sup>303</sup> Besides Monter’s contribution, which follows in the footsteps of the monumental research of Henry Charles Lea, Maria Sofia Messana Virga has highlighted the role of the Inquisition in deterring political dissent through an activity also directed at controlling the print industry and book circulation.<sup>304</sup> Thus, Sicily’s geo-political situation shows the centrality of the role of religion and religious conflicts in shaping Sicilian politics and culture.

Taking Sicilian culture into consideration more specifically, Massimo Zaggia’s *Tra Mantova e la Sicilia* provides the most comprehensive overview of the political as well as cultural outlook of Cinquecento Sicily to date. Though Zaggia’s object of investigation is the presence of Cassinese monks in Sicily and their exchange between the island and Mantua in the first half of the sixteenth century, in the first of his three volumes he reviews and outlines the Sicilian cultural and political environment during the reign of Charles V and particularly during the rule of the Viceroy Ferrante Gonzaga (1535-1546).<sup>305</sup> Zaggia’s account shows that court life and Sicilian culture prospered under Gonzaga’s rule and that, throughout the century, Sicily was drawn culturally closer to the peninsula and therefore looked to redefine its political and cultural identity.<sup>306</sup> Zaggia, who provides a detailed descriptive overview of Cinquecento Sicily, explores in depth the exchanges between the Cassinese and the related sojourn of Teofilo Folengo in Sicily, where he composed *La palermitana*, a *terza rima* religious poem as seen in 4.3, and the *Atto della*

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<sup>301</sup> William Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy: the Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>302</sup> Monter, p. 61.

<sup>303</sup> For the jurisdictional conflict between the Inquisition and the baronial class on the one hand and the viceregal power on the other see also Vittorio Sciuti Rossi, ‘Criminalità nobiliare e Inquisizione spagnola nella Sicilia di Filippo II’, *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Studi Politici*, 2 (2007), 289-297.

<sup>304</sup> Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of Spain* (New York: Macmillan, 1906-07) and *The Inquisition in the Spanish Dependencies. Sicily-Naples-Sardinia-Milan-The Canaries-Mexico-Peru-New Granada* (New York: Macmillan, 1908). Maria Messana Virga, *Il santo Ufficio dell’Inquisizione: Sicilia 1500-1782* (Palermo: Istituto poligrafico europeo, 2012), pp. 18-19.

<sup>305</sup> Massimo Zaggia, *Tra Mantova e la Sicilia nel Cinquecento*, 3 vols (Florence: Olschki, 2003). For the biographical details of Ferrante Gonzaga I refer to Giampiero Brunelli, ‘Ferrante Gonzaga’, in *DBI*, LVII (2001), pp. 734-744.

<sup>306</sup> Zaggia, especially pp. 203-4.

*Pinta*, a very successful *sacra rappresentazione*; he does not further investigate Sicily's literary culture.<sup>307</sup>

Particularly relevant with regard to the literary culture and poetics of Cinquecento Sicily is Pietro Mazzamuto's contribution, which focusses particularly on lyric and epic poetry.<sup>308</sup> Mazzamuto highlights that Sicilian lyric poetry was characterised by some peculiar features, including a correlation between poetic plot and real events; that Petrarchism was a significant poetic model for both the genres of lyric and epic poetry; and, with regard to the latter, that Eastern Sicily was particularly characterised by the flourishing of an epic poetry oscillating between an erudite and a popular nature. Mazzamuto identifies the main feature of Sicilian literary mannerism in its figurativeness, and discusses prominent literati such as Paolo Caggio, whose role in promoting the Tuscan vernacular as literary language in Sicily was pivotal. Mazzamuto also discusses Antonio Veneziano, who is renowned for his poetry in dialect, stressing the continuity between the late-sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries in terms of literary culture.<sup>309</sup>

Characterised by the presence of a variety of idioms and by the literary legacy of the Sicilian School, the cultural history of the island has also been the object of scholarly discussions addressing more specifically sociolinguistic issues, the Cinquecento debate on literary language in Sicily and the history of regional literature in dialect. The studies of Gabriella Alfieri and Franco Lo Piparo in particular have investigated the coexistence of Castilian Spanish, Latin, Tuscan vernacular and Sicilian dialect from a political and social perspective and, more importantly, have discussed the reception of the Tuscan vernacular, and particularly Bembo's model, as canonical literary language, as well as the literary tradition in dialect championed by Claudio Mario Arezzo and Antonio Veneziano.<sup>310</sup> With regard to the relationship between the Italian literary language and Sicilian dialect, Lo Piparo has observed that the difference between a more spoken

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<sup>307</sup> Zaggia dedicates one volume to the Cassinese in Sicily and to Folengo and his works. Both the *Atto della Pinta* and the *Palermitana* were left unpublished by the author.

<sup>308</sup> Pietro Mazzamuto, 'Lirica ed epica nel sec. XVI' in *Storia della Sicilia*, ed. by Rosario Romeo, 11 vols (Naples: Società editrice Storia di Napoli e della Sicilia, 1979-1981), IV, pp. 289-358.

<sup>309</sup> Mazzamuto, especially pp. 295-346.

<sup>310</sup> Gabriella Alfieri, 'La Sicilia', in *L'italiano nelle regioni. Lingua nazionale e identità regionali*, ed. by Francesco Bruni, 2 vols (Turin: Utet, 1992-1994), I, pp. 798-860. Alfieri, Stefania Iannizzotto, Daria Motta, Rosaria Sardo, 'Storia politico-sociale e storia degli usi linguistici', in *Lingue e Culture in Sicilia*, 3 vols, ed. by Giovanni Ruffino (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 2013), I, pp. 567- 763 (contributions by Alfieri at pp. 568-587; by Alfieri and Iannizzotto at pp. 588-613). Franco Lo Piparo, 'Sicilia linguistica' in *Storia d'Italia: le regioni dall'Unità a oggi: la Sicilia*, ed. by Maurice Aymard and Giuseppe Giarrizzo (Turin: Einaudi, 1987), *Storia d'Italia. Le regioni dall'Unità a oggi*, pp. 735-807. Luigi Sorrento, *La diffusione della lingua italiana nel Cinquecento in Sicilia* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1921).

Sicilian and a more written Italian was perceived as a difference of linguistic range within the same idiom.<sup>311</sup>

The rise of Sicilian Petrarchism, connected with the authority of the Tuscan vernacular, was associated with the academies, the main centres promoting the Tuscan vernacular in Sicily. More specifically, the Accademia dei Solitari (Palermo, 1549-1554) and the Accademia degli Accesi (Palermo, 1568-1580) were especially relevant, since the Solitari was founded by prominent literato Paolo Caggio, and the Accesi, the cultural heir of the Solitari, published their poetic production in two books of *Rime*, printed in Palermo by Matteo Mayda in 1571 and 1573 respectively.<sup>312</sup> Discussing the *Rime*, Raffaele Girardi has pointed out the ideological and moralising approach to Petrarch's model that characterises the production of the Accesi, who favoured the sonnet form but also composed Tuscan octaves. Girardi has highlighted that their poetry displays a strong adhesion to the Petrarchan model within a conservative and post-Tridentine outlook, not least due to the connection of the academy with the viceregal and inquisitorial powers.<sup>313</sup> Focussing particularly on the poems of Antonio Alfano and his reference to Petrarch as a repository of images and citations, Irene Bagni has further investigated the Petrarchism of the Accesi and remarked how the *Rime*, composed of small *canzonieri* by several authors, are generally poems dedicated to specific occasions displaying a variety of stylistic ranges.<sup>314</sup>

The Academies of the Solitari and Accesi were not the only academies in Sicily. As Montoliu's research shows, the polycentrism of the island enabled the development of academic environments and networks. Her database of Sicilian academies and academicians between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries lists 97 academies (1154 academicians) and provides relevant historical details on each of them as well as information on their members and related works.<sup>315</sup> The data gathered shows the flourishing of academies in the capital city Palermo beside the Solitari and Accesi: the aristocratic Accademia dei Cavalieri (1565-1636), dei Risoluti (1570-1581), the

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<sup>311</sup> Lo Piparo, 'Sicilia linguistica', p. 806.

<sup>312</sup> *Rime della Accademia de gli Accesi di Palermo* (Palermo: Mayda, 1571) and *Delle rime de gli Accademici Accesi di Palermo. Libro secondo* (Palermo: Mayda, 1573). After the closure of the Solitari, Caggio founded the Accademia dei Solleciti in 1554 and in 1568 the members of both Solleciti and Solitari merged into the Accademia degli Accesi.

<sup>313</sup> Raffaele Girardi, *Modelli e maniere: esperienze poetiche del Cinquecento meridionale* (Bari: Palomar 1999), pp. 180-209.

<sup>314</sup> Bagni, 'L'Accademia Palermitana degli Accesi', pp. 233-44.

<sup>315</sup> Montoliu, *Accademie siciliane nel regno asburgico (1400-1701)* <<http://blogs.univ-tlse2.fr/lineaeditoriale/banche-di-dati/>>. See also Montoliu, 'Accademie siciliane 1400-1701...', in *The Italian Academies 1525-1700: Networks of Culture, Innovation and Dissent*, ed. by Jane E. Everson, Denis V. Reidy and Lisa Sampson, pp. 306-15.

Opportuni (1570-1607), the group gathering around Francesco II Moncada (1588-1592; also in Caltanissetta), the one gathering around Berlinghiero Ventimiglia (1592-1593).<sup>316</sup> Messina was the seat of an Accademia Messinese (1540-1560) and of the aristocratic Accademia della Stella (1595-1678). Academies and cultural circles also appeared in other minor cities and towns, such as in Gangi (Accademia dei Curiosi, 1550-70) and Castelbuono (Accademia dei Curiosi, 1597-1603), both under the patronage of the Ventimiglia.

Montoliu's research also shows that the flourishing of academies that characterised late-Cinquecento Sicily continued in the following century and was distinguished by a close connection with the patronage of the viceroy or of a local aristocratic family, such as the aforementioned Ventimiglia and Moncada. As a result, the cultural and literary development fostered by the Sicilian academic experiences was intrinsically associated and aligned with the institutional and political powers. Furthermore, from cross-checking Montoliu's database and *IAD*<sup>317</sup> it appears that, while Sicilian academicians were not members of mainland academies, many of them studied or spent a period abroad, such as Antonio Veneziano, and specific connections with other Italian academies developed towards the end of the century.<sup>318</sup> The production of Sicilian academicians, such as Caggio and Veneziano, nonetheless reveals the cultural and literary influence of contemporary developments of mainland Italy in Sicily, as will be seen.

It is against this background and in this context that *Orlando furioso* will receive particular attention, and will be seen to have had a singular and interesting reception in Sicily. On the one hand, in Sicily the *Orlando furioso* did not inspire a production of *ottava rima* poems continuing or revolving around chivalric material, as happened in Northern Italy, and Sicilian epic poetry fundamentally developed after Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, which was regarded as the primary model. On the other hand, Ariosto's poem was not ignored in poetic production and the presence of *Orlando furioso* in Sicilian culture in the sixteenth century has in fact been mentioned in several cases, yet never specifically addressed. In his descriptive overview on the diffusion of the literary language in Cinquecento Sicily, Luigi Sorrento has pointed out Paolo Caggio's reference to *Orlando furioso* in his dialogue *Iconomica*. Mazzamuto has mentioned the influence

<sup>316</sup> Montoliu includes among academies also groups gathering under the patronage of aristocratic families.

<sup>317</sup> *Italian Academies Database* <<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/ItalianAcademies/>> [accessed 1 September 2018]. See also the list of abbreviations.

<sup>318</sup> I cite as example Tomaso Ballo, who was member of the Accesi of Palermo and the Alterati of Florence and died in 1612. For the connection of a prominent Messinese academy with academies in Naples and Rome in the Seicento see Bottari, 'The Accademia della Fucina', pp. 77-87. For a more general perspective on academies as social networks see Simone Testa, *Italian Academies and Their Networks, 1525-1700: From Local to Global* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).



of Ariosto in the poems of Giuseppe Cumia, Marco Filippi and Antonio Alfano. In his analysis of Antonio Veneziano's poetics in dialect, Sebastiano Vento has identified Ariosto among his models, and chivalric references in his poetry have also been highlighted by Giuseppe Pitrè. Moreover, Carmelina Naselli has found drawings representing episodes from the *Furioso* in a bureaucratic document from Catania. Finally, Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale* has provided yet another interesting example of the presence of the *Furioso* in Sicilian culture.<sup>319</sup>

References to Ariosto and *Orlando furioso* have been discovered in a scattered fashion, from vernacular treatises to poems in dialect, and often only as brief mentions. The fact that scholarship on the reception of Ariosto's romance has generally overlooked the Sicilian environment is particularly surprising in light of this. It is noteworthy, however, that the presence of *Orlando furioso* has been more specifically addressed with regard to the development of Sicilian polyphonic music and the later *Teatro dei Pupi* (see also 6.1). While the theatrical adaptation of romance paladins falls outside the scope of this thesis,<sup>320</sup> the Cinquecento setting of the *Furioso* in music is discussed in 7.2, where it is re-evaluated in the terms of the dissemination of Ariosto's romance in courtly environments.

## 7. ORLANDO FURIOSO AND COURTLY CULTURE IN SICILY

### 7.1 *Orlando furioso* and encomiastic poetry: Sigismondo Paolucci's *Notte d'Aphrica* (1535)

Unsurprisingly, the first occurrences of the influence of *Orlando furioso*, a romance composed for the Este court of Ferrara, are found in courtly environments and contexts, especially in connection with Ferrante Gonzaga. Though the imperial court was located in Madrid, Sicily was not devoid of a court, as the viceroys, who belonged to prominent Spanish and Italian aristocratic families, were usually accompanied by their own following, and therefore brought with them different cultural trends. Ettore Pignatelli (viceroy between 1518 and 1535), for instance, was patron to the Neapolitan Antonio

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<sup>319</sup> See also the works mentioned in 6.1. Sorrento, p. 84-85. Mazzamuto, pp. 300-303. Sebastiano Vento, *Petrarchismo e concettismo in Antonio Veneziano e gli spiriti della lirica amorosa italiana. Ricerche e studi* (Rome: Maglione and Strini, 1917), pp. 30, 44-45. Giuseppe Pitrè, 'Le tradizioni cavalleresche popolari in Sicilia', in *Romania*, 13 (1884), 315-398 (pp. 364-365). Carmelina Naselli, 'Figure e scene dell'*Orlando Furioso* in un'antica pergamena catanese', *Rinascita*, 4 (1941), 206-228. The discovery of Marino's work is discussed in Part Five.

<sup>320</sup> For the tradition of the Teatro dei Pupi I refer to Marcella Croce, *The Chivalric Folk Tradition in Sicily: a History of Storytelling, Puppetry, Painted Carts and Other Arts* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014).

Minturno, who tutored his children and who later took part in the Ariosto-Tasso quarrel.<sup>321</sup> A lieutenant of Charles V, Ferrante Gonzaga was the son of Isabella d'Este, one of Ariosto's patrons, and married to the Neapolitan Isabella di Capua, demonstrating how, by belonging to the Spanish and Italian aristocracy, the viceroys of Sicily were members of a class united by a web of matrimonial and dynastic relations, which account for a shared social as well as cultural upbringing and courtly tradition. As noted above, the rule of Ferrante Gonzaga coincided with a renewed cultural liveliness in Sicily. Gonzaga was appointed viceroy in 1535 following Charles V's conquest of Tunis, in which Gonzaga participated. The appointment took place during the Emperor's victory tour in Italy, which began in Sicily and continued in Palermo and Messina where it was designed on the model of ancient military triumphs. In Messina, moreover, the preparation involved the prominent Sicilian figures Francesco Maurolico and Polidoro da Caravaggio.<sup>322</sup>

The Emperor's tour inspired a production of encomiastic works throughout Italy, including Sicily, where Sigismondo Paolucci's *Notte d'Aphrica* was published in 1535. Details of Paolucci's life are scant, and all we know is that he apparently came from a town in central Italy, and he was the secretary of the duke of Camerino and the author of a *Continuazione dell'Orlando furioso* (1543).<sup>323</sup> The *Notte d'Aphrica*, published in Messina and dedicated to Eleonora Gonzaga, sister of the Viceroy Ferrante, is an *ottava rima* poem comprising two books of four cantos each, which celebrates the enterprise of Emperor Charles V in Tunisia and the related heroic deeds of Ferrante. Zaggia has pointed out that Paolucci's attempt at writing a contemporary epic dedicated to the Emperor's victory in the wake of the fashion of Ariosto's poem is one of a group of poems sharing similar subject matter (Tunis) and the same model (Ariosto). These works are Lodovico Dolce's *Stanze composte nella vittoria africana*, Pompeo Bilintani's *Cesare V Affricano* and the anonymous *Vera descrizione della potentissima armata et vittoria Cesare*. Moreover, from the poems of several authors which accompany the *Notte d'Aphrica*,

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<sup>321</sup> On Minturno's sojourn in Sicily see Zaggia, I. For Ettore Pignatelli see Rossella Cancila, 'Pignatelli, Ettore' in *DBI*, LXXXIII (2015), pp. 601-603. On Minturno see also the Introduction of this thesis.

<sup>322</sup> On the triumph of Charles V I refer to Maria Antonietta Visceglia, 'Il viaggio cerimoniale di Carlo V dopo Tunisi', in *Congreso Internacional 'Carlos V y la quiebra del humanismo político en Europa (1530-1558)'*, Madrid, 3-6 de julio de 2000, 4 vols (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2001), II, pp. 133-172.

<sup>323</sup> Paolucci was from Cerreto according to edit16 and from Spello according to Zaggia, I (p. 76). In both his works Paolucci defines himself as knight and Count Palatine. Very little is known, however, beside his literary production. The *Continuatione* was printed in Venice by Sabio.

Zaggia deduces the existence of a small literary circle, either in Sicily or more narrowly in Messina, in which Paolucci was involved.<sup>324</sup>

In her discussion of the *Notte d'Aphrica*, Lucrezia Lorenzini has highlighted its connection with the cultural environment of Messina and identified its main features in terms of style and content.<sup>325</sup> Lorenzini's analysis of Paolucci's poem has revealed the influence of Ariosto's style, the presence of structural elements derived from the classical epic tradition, passages echoing mythological, pastoral and georgic poetry, allusions to Dante and especially Petrarch, landscape descriptions and references to Sicilian myths and legends. More importantly, Lorenzini has pointed out the narrative analogy between two situations in Paolucci's poem and similar ones in the *Furioso*: firstly, as Charlemagne offers Angelica as prize to the best paladin to pacify Orlando and Rinaldo (*Of* I, 8-9), so Charles V offers the captaincy to appease the discord of his knights, and secondly, as plants and trees are torn down at the triumphant passage of the Emperor, so plants and trees are torn down at the passage of mad Orlando (*Of* XXIII, 135).<sup>326</sup> Such comparison is especially based on the paladin's exceptional strength; it is noteworthy that Orlando was gifted with it by God in order to defend the Christian faith (*Of* XXXIV, 63). The analogy between Orlando and Charles V thus results in the exaltation of the emperor's prowess as well as his providential role.

Significantly, the connection with Ariosto's romance is explicitly declared by Paolucci in the first stanzas of the poem, where he clarifies the subject matter of his poetry:

Il tremebondo horror, il novo Marte  
l'invitta gloria, e 'l triumphale alloro  
del bel paese, che 'l gran Mintio parte  
che per lui vinta sia, l'età dell'oro  
[...]  
Canterò con fidel se bassa rima.

Non canterò d'Orlando o d'Oliviero  
né di Rinaldo Angelica e Medoro,  
non Rodomonte Marfisa o Rugiero  
Bradamante o Gradasso; né di loro  
valoros'altro e nobile cavaliere  
del popol franco dell'hispano o il moro,  
altr'impresa maggior mi scorgo avante

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<sup>324</sup> Zaggia, I, pp. 76-78. Lodovico Dolce, *Stanze di m. Lodovico Dolce. Composte nella vittoria africana novamente havuta dal sacratissimo imperatore Carolo Quinto*, (Rome: [n. pub.], 1535; Genoa: Bellone, 1535). Pompeo Bilintani, *Cesare V Affricano nel quale si contengono li memorandi gesti & gloriose vittorie de sua Cesarea Maesta nel anno M.D.XXXV* (Naples: Cancer, 1536). *Vera descrizione della potentissima armata et vittoria cesarea fatta in Africa per la sustentatione de la fede christiana contra Barbarossa [...]* ([n.p.]: [n. pub.], [1550(?)]).

<sup>325</sup> Lucrezia Lorenzini, 'Nel nome di Dio l'impresa di Carlo V contro gli infedeli. *Le Notte d'Aphrica*', *La parola del testo*, 7 (2003), 355-373.

<sup>326</sup> Lorenzini, pp. 365-366 and 372.

*altro Carlo e Marsilio altro Agramante.*

Non volarò coll'hippogrifo al cielo  
né torrò a questo o portarolli il senno,  
né spirto ignudo dopo 'l mortal telo  
assalirà l'inferno; né l'ardeno  
liquor offenderà di caldo o gielo  
d'amore o sdegno come tanti senno  
antiqui e generosi cavalieri,  
né dirò laghi incantati né verzieri.

Né morto altrui si harà varcato Lethe  
tornerà 'l mondo a riveder sepulchro;  
tacerò l'arboscelli, e l'onde liete  
la lancia d'oro, il corno, e'l scudo pulcro,  
né turbaransi l'anime inquiete  
nel centro, ch'io non tanto il dir'impulchro  
non so Ariosto Boiardo o 'l divino  
altiero stil del gran Pietro Aretino.

L'incantati elmi e le fatate spade  
non dirò, men giganti né fatiche  
di donne erranti in boschi e per le strade;  
né le prodezze simulate antiche  
*che vaga e bella quella prisca etade  
fan molto più parer,* e a le mendiche  
e somnachieuse voglie dan di sproni  
per animarli e notarsi tra boni

[...]

[...]  
*ma le moderne vere opre famose*  
d'oggi che'l mondo fan bello e altiero  
notar con fido metro in charte spero.

*Canterò l'arme, e tacerò li amori*  
che l'ocio amico a questi, a quei fatica,  
questi grati a Ferrante, e quei già fuori  
banditi come a chi virtute è amica;  
perché de lor li triumphi, e l'ampli honori  
nascon via sempre, e misera e mendica  
fugge viltà, ch'abhorre ogni eccess'alma  
che ben ripensa in questa mortal salma.

I, I 1-5, 9-10

While Paolucci distances himself from Ariosto in terms of content, he nonetheless presents his narrative as contiguous with Ariosto's: Charles V is another Charlemagne, the ottoman admiral Hayreddin Barbarossa a new Marsilio, the Saracen king of Saragozza, and the sultan Suleiman I is a new Agramante. Paolucci acknowledges that the romance adventures which inspire and are narrated by poets make the era of the errant

knights seem pristine and virtuous compared to his time. His poetic intention is therefore to narrate the modern heroic enterprises that make his time stand out ('le moderne vere opre famose | d'oggi che'l mondo fan bello e altiero' I, I 9) as previous poets did with regard to the past. His narrative is, then, in an ideal continuity with the tradition of Boiardo, Ariosto and Aretino, who are models for more than their vernacular style. The ideal continuum with the *Furioso* is made clear in the last stanzas of the poem:

D'Italia canterò l'invitti heroi  
 al' hor che a Carlo uniti veneranno  
 ad obedirlo, e canterò di poi  
 quando che a Roma l'accompagnaranno  
 le magnanime pompe e altieri suoi  
 gesti ivi; e tutti l'ordin che daranno  
 non sol d'Italia e di la [sic] Santa Chiesa  
 ma contra turchi l'aspettata impresa.

E quel che forsi tanto oggi si teme  
 congnozerassi quanto al secul giova  
 quest'almo Carlo, anzi quest'alma speme  
 di mundo sola inusitata e nuova;  
 tal che pace e vittoria unite insieme  
 n'andaran sempre e cantaransi a prova  
 tra l'honorate penne di scrittori  
*le donne i cavallier l'armi e l'amori.*

II, IV 111-112

Paolucci, who states his intention to narrate the triumph of the Emperor in Rome and his future deeds, represents his victory as the beginning of a peaceful period and defines chivalric poems as a sign of such peace. By identifying an ideal affiliation with the *Furioso*<sup>327</sup> Paolucci implicitly connects Ariosto's romance, and the romance tradition, with traditional epics.

This connection is also evident in the poems introducing the *Notte d'Aphrica*. In a Latin poem Aurelius Taurellus associates Paolucci with Homer and Virgil because he sings the heroic deeds of the Emperor as the Greek and Roman poets did those of Achilles and Aeneas ('meonio aeacides multum si debet homero | Vergilio et tantum dardanus ille suo | forte Philogenie plus debes Carole muse'), in another Latin poem Francesco Gallo mentions Dante, Petrarch and Ariosto as vernacular poetic models and in a sonnet Nicola Giacomo Alibrando praises Paolucci's style as superior to both Boiardo and Ariosto.<sup>328</sup> I have not been able to identify Taurellus and little is known about Gallo besides the fact

<sup>327</sup> See Lorenzini, p. 373.

<sup>328</sup> Paolucci, *Notte d'Aphrica*, \*4<sup>r</sup> (Alibrando's sonnet), \*3<sup>r</sup>-\*4<sup>v</sup> (Gallo's poem). Alibrando's sonnet is transcribed by Zaggia, I, (p. 77).

that he composed a Latin poem, *Caesaris Ansalonii et Helyonorae Lancae epithalamium*, published in Messina in 1554.<sup>329</sup> Alibrando, however, is the author of two works, also published in Messina by Spira, the *Spasmo di Maria Vergine* (1534) and *Il triompho il qual fece Messina nella intrata del imperator Carlo V* (1535).<sup>330</sup>

Paolucci's choice to write about heroic deeds rather than love and his reference to Ariosto as poetic model show that the *Furioso* was associated with the epic genre as early as 1535; moreover, together with Dante and Petrarch, frequently alluded to by Paolucci, Ariosto had been accepted as canonical in vernacular poetry. Ariosto's significance as a model for vernacular poetry is of substantial importance in the process of the dissemination of the *Furioso* in new territories like Sicily, as will be discussed subsequently with regard to lyric poetry. Paolucci's *Notte d'Aphrica*, which was inspired by a specific local event and characterised by a strongly encomiastic theme connected with the Viceroy Gonzaga, shows how Ariosto's romance was appropriated as a model to suit new courtly dynamics and tastes and how its first dissemination in Sicily was connected to such tastes, which also underpinned the adaptation of the *Furioso* into a new medium, music.

## **7.2 The *Orlando furioso* set to music in Sicilian aristocratic courts: the madrigals of Giandomenico Martoretta, Pietro Havente and Salvatore di Cataldo in the mid-sixteenth century**

A characteristic feature of Sicily was the presence of many minor courts under the patronage of the local aristocracy. While in Naples the conflict between the local barons and the Spanish Viceroy led to the suppression of the Neapolitan academies in 1547, in the same period the Sicilian aristocracy was generally integrated within the Spanish institutions and thus able to play a more active role in the development of Sicilian culture. Among the most prominent Sicilian families, who were often connected through a web of matrimonies and dynastic ties, the Moncada of Paternò and Caltanissetta and the Barrese of Pietraperzia deserve a special mention because of their artistic and literary patronage and, more importantly, for their appreciation of *Orlando furioso* set to music.

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<sup>329</sup> *Caesaris Ansalonii et Helyonorae Lancae epithalamium* (Messina: Spira, 1554). There are no elements to identify, or even connect, Aurelius Taurellus with Lelio Torello (Lelius Taurellus), jurist at the Medici court (I refer to edit16).

<sup>330</sup> On the *Spasmo*, an *ottava rima* poem in which Alibrando comments and elaborates on the *Andata al calvario*, an altarpiece by artist Polidoro da Caravaggio, see the recent edition: Cola Giacomo D'Alibrando, *Il spasmo di Maria Vergine: ottave per un dipinto di Polidoro da Caravaggio a Messina*, ed. by Barbara Agosti, Giancarlo Alfano and Ippolita Di Maio (Naples: Paparo, 1999).

Of Catalan origin, the House of Moncada was one of the most prominent aristocratic families in Sicily (Ugo of Moncada was viceroy from 1509 to 1516) and owned several feudal territories, besides Paternò and Caltanissetta. More importantly, Francesco I, his son Cesare, Cesare's wife Aloisia de Luna and their son Francesco II were among the most prominent cultural patrons in Cinquecento Sicily, establishing a tradition of courtly patronage which was not limited to literary production but included art, music and education. Aloisia and Francesco II supported the foundation of a Jesuit school in Caltanissetta in 1588 and, through her marriage to Fabrizio Moncada, the Lombard painter Sofonisba Anguissola joined their court in 1573.

The musical patronage of Francesco I Moncada in Caltanissetta and that of Pietro Barrese and Giulia Moncada, daughter of Francesco I, in Pietraperzia is particularly relevant in terms of the reception of Ariosto's romance. The first evidence of the practice of madrigal composition in Sicily, Giandomenico Martoretta's *Li madrigali a quattro voci* (1548), was dedicated to Francesco I Moncada and features Ariosto's *Orlando furioso* as its main poetic source. Martoretta, who was from Calabria, also wrote a second and third book of madrigals and the *Sacrae cantiones vulgo motecta appellatae quinque vocum, liber primus*, published respectively in 1552, 1554 and 1566. His last two works, however, were composed at a time when he was not connected with the court of the Moncada, and indeed his connections with Sicily were generally fading.<sup>331</sup> Significantly, the *Furioso* features as a source for both the books of madrigals associated with the prominent Sicilian family.

In her extensive discussion of Martoretta's madrigals, Maria Antonella Balsano has insightfully identified a web of connections among the dedicatees, mostly members of prominent families from Sicily and Naples, as well as Martoretta's poetic sources.<sup>332</sup> Significantly, out of the 34 madrigals composing the first book, 9 are stanzas from *Orlando furioso* and thus form a micro-group which is consistent in terms of theme and source, since they are taken from the same canto and are almost contiguous stanzas.

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<sup>331</sup> *De lo eccellentissimo musico la Martoretta, li madrigali a quattro voce. Venezia: Girolamo Scoto, 1548; Il secondo libro di madrigali cromatici a quatro voci. (Venice: Gardano, 1552); Il terzo libro di madrigali a quattro voci con cinque madrigali del primo libro. (Venice: Gardano, 1554). Sacrae cantiones vulgo motecta appellatae quinque vocum, liber primus (Venice: Gardano, 1566). For Martoretta's biography I refer to Maria Antonella Balsano, 'Martoretta, Giandomenico' in *DBI*, LXXI (2008), pp. 366-368.*

<sup>332</sup> Maria Antonella Balsano, '“La Martoretta di Calabria” e gli inizi della scuola polifonica siciliana', in *Polifonisti calabresi dei secoli XVI e XVII. Testi della Giornata di Studi su ‘La Polifonia sacra e profana in Calabria nei secoli XVI e XVII’ (Reggio Calabria, 26 novembre 1981)*, ed. by Giuseppe Donato (Rome: Torre d'Orfeo, 1985), pp. 35-77. Balsano's edition of Martoretta's second book of madrigals provides an extensive introduction which re-elaborates her previous contribution on Martoretta's first book: *Il secondo libro di madrigali cromatici a quattro voci: 1552*, ed. by Maria Antonella Balsano (Florence: Olschki, 1988).

Moreover, another micro-group of madrigals (22-27) also refers to the *Furioso* but in a very original way: by incorporating verses from *Of* VII, 76 within a *terza rima* poem all the madrigals are connected. The cycle is dedicated to Roderico Mendoza in memory of his daughter, who used to sing stanzas from the *Furioso*. Moreover, madrigal 21 is based on the first octave of the *stanza trasmutata* of *Orlando furioso* (*Of* XLIV, 61) by Dianora Sanseverino mentioned in 2.5.<sup>333</sup> More importantly, taking into account Martoretta's poetic choices and his connection with the Moncada, Balsano has suggested that the preference for the *Furioso* was connected with the Viceroy Gonzaga and was due to literary taste as well as political reasons, as the musician's patron sought to demonstrate his political affiliation and loyalty to the Crown.<sup>334</sup> The fortune of the *Furioso* in music, furthermore, may have also been inspired by Gonzaga's musical patronage, exemplified by his bringing a young Orlandus de Lassus to Italy from his travel in the Low Countries in 1545.<sup>335</sup>

In order to become an instrument through which the Moncada could reassert their role as cultural patrons as well as their connections with other aristocratic families, *Orlando furioso* was preferred for its musicality, a significant feature of court sociability as well as of the *Furioso*'s fortune. The association between the *Furioso* and music dates back to the composition of the romance in Ferrara, which was an important musical centre and where Ariosto's stanzas were set to music as early as the 1530s. By the mid-Cinquecento, the setting to music of the romance became widespread in courtly environments. As a result, while the role of the Este family remained prominent in terms of patronage, stanzas from the *Furioso* can be found throughout a vast madrigalistic production.<sup>336</sup> Southern Italy was no exception. In his essay on the editorial production in the musical field in Naples, Angelo Pompilio provides a lists of musicians and works connected with Naples.<sup>337</sup> Cross-checking Balsano's list of Ariosto's stanzas set to music with the list of composers and works connected to Naples provided by Pompilio shows that no least than

<sup>333</sup> Martoretta, *Il secondo libro*, pp. XV-XVII. The frontispiece, titles and poetic sources of Martoretta's *Primo Libro* are in 'La Martoretta di Calabria', pp. 60-61. Dianora is a variant of the name Eleonora.

<sup>334</sup> Martoretta, *Il secondo libro*, pp. XVII-XVIII.

<sup>335</sup> James Haar, 'Lassus', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press [accessed 20 May 2017], <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/16063pg1>>.

<sup>336</sup> James Haar, 'Arie per cantar stanze ariostesche', in *L'Ariosto, la musica, i musicisti*, ed. by Maria Antonella Balsano, *Quaderni della rivista italiana di musicologia*, 5 (Florence: Olschki, 1981); pp. 31-46. Edited by Balsano, this contribution provides a list of the stanzas of *Orlando furioso* set to music (pp. 47-88).

<sup>337</sup> Angelo Pompilio, 'Editoria musicale a Napoli e in Italia nel Cinque-Seicento', in *Musica e cultura a Napoli dal XV al XIX secolo*, ed. by Lorenzo Bianconi e Renato Bossa (Florence: Olschki, 1983), pp. 79-102. A new digital tool has also proved very helpful: *RePIM* (Repertorio della poesia italiana in musica 1500-1700; see also the list of abbreviations), which allows to visualise how many, and who, set to music a specific work or poem (<http://repim.muspe.unibo.it/default.aspx>). [accessed: 17/10/2018].



17 composers set to music stanzas from the *Furioso* (in at least 18 works) between 1543 and 1599. Among the composers that set to music Ariosto's stanzas are Benedetto Serafico from Nardò and the Neapolitan Aurelio Roccia, who was court musician and head of the Roccia family of musicians.<sup>338</sup>

While Ariosto's verses commonly circulated as madrigals, it is noteworthy that one of the biggest madrigalistic cycles based on the *Furioso* as a source was the Sicilian Salvatore di Cataldo's *Tutti i principii de canti dell'Ariosto posti in musica* (1559), which predates other big cycles of madrigals drawing on the *Furioso*, such as Jachet Berchem's *Primo, secondo et terzo libro del capriccio [...] sopra le stanze del Furioso. A quattro voci*. (1561).<sup>339</sup> The prominence of the *Furioso* in Martoretta's work, the first Sicilian book of madrigals, and, later, as will be seen, in De Cataldo's is striking if we consider the lack of Ariosto's epigones in Sicily with the partial exception of Paolucci. Therefore, I suggest that in Sicilian aristocratic courts Ariosto's romance acted and circulated more as an important instrument of court sociability than a literary model for romance and epic and that its dissemination in courtly environments was influenced by the cultural development of mainland Italy.

The *Furioso* also features in Martoretta's second book of madrigals, characterised by a dedicatee for each madrigal. However, as only one stanza is from Ariosto's romance (*Of* I, 58, in which Sacripante plans to rape Angelica), the *Furioso* is no longer the main poetic source anymore. This second book of madrigals is instead characterised by a variety of sources, including authors as diverse as Tansillo, Aretino, and Berni. It is noteworthy that Martoretta dedicated two madrigals to the Sicilian poet Gian Nicola Rizzari, who was also the author of the texts (two poems in Sicilian) and that two madrigals are in Latin. After investigating Martoretta's choices and dedicatees, Balsano has argued that, while still associated with the Moncada, his second book reveals a broader connection with Naples due to the prominence of Tansillo and the presence of dedicatees from the Kingdom of Naples. *Orlando furioso* thus features among a very diverse production and its inclusion in what can be considered a small corpus of works

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<sup>338</sup> Benedetto Serafico, *Il primo libro delli madrigali a cinque voci [...]* (Venice: Guglielmo, 1575); *Il terzo libro di madrigali a cinque et a sei voci [...]* (Venice: Scotto, 1581). On Serafico see Pier Paolo Scattolin, 'Nardò, Benedetto Serafico', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press [accessed 10 September 2018], <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.19573>>. Aurelio Roccia, *Primo libro de' madrigali a quattro voci [...]* (Venice: Angelieri, 1571). On Roccia see Keith A. Larson, 'Roccia family', *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press [accessed 10 September 2018], <<https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.23615>> accessed 10/9/2018>.

<sup>339</sup> Jachet Berchem, *Primo, secondo et terzo libro del capriccio [...] sopra le stanze del Furioso. A quattro voci*. (Venice: Gardano, 1561).

including especially renowned Southern authors points to the deep-seated dissemination of Ariosto's romance in Southern Italian elite culture.

The *Furioso* was particularly appreciated at the court of Pietraperzia, which was connected with the Moncada as Giulia Moncada and Pietro Barrese continued the family tradition of musical patronage. To Pietraperzia, in fact, are connected the works of composers Salvatore di Cataldo and Pietro Havente, who set to music works and stanzas by famous poets, including *Orlando furioso*.<sup>340</sup> While Havente set to music two stanzas from the *Furioso* (1556), Di Cataldo set to music the beginning of each of Ariosto's cantos (*Tutti i principii de canti dell'Ariosto posti in musica*, 1559). Not much is known about Havente and Di Cataldo apart from their association with the court of Pietraperzia in the 1550s. Dedicated to the Marquis Pietro Barrese, Havente's only work, *Madrigali di Pietro Havente musico dell'illustrissimo S. marchese di Pietrapertia et ad esso signore dedicati. Libro primo*, features two stanzas from Sacripante's lament (*Of I*, 40-41). His other sources are mainly by Southern authors and include a play (Marcantonio Epicuro's *Cecaria*) and poems by Caggio, Tansillo, and Terracina. On the other hand, Di Cataldo's work is a collection of madrigals based on the *Furioso* as its only source. It is noteworthy that in the dedication to Giulia Moncada, written in 1555, Di Cataldo mentions that he had been at the service of Barrese for a long time and that he had been requested to set to music the first stanzas of the *Furioso*'s cantos: a choice, Balsano has pointed out, which may have been influenced by Laura Terracina's *Discorso sopra i primi canti dell'Orlando furioso*, which reworked the first stanza of each canto of Ariosto's poem.<sup>341</sup> After the first experiences of Martoretta, Havente and Di Cataldo, the Sicilian polyphonic musical tradition further developed in the sixteenth century, as exemplified by the copious and varied production of the Sicilian Pietro Vinci.<sup>342</sup>

The web of poetic relations connecting authors and dedicatees in Martoretta's madrigals as well as Havente and Di Cataldo's works shows not only that *Orlando furioso* was appreciated in the Sicilian aristocracy, but also that this first courtly phase of the *Furioso*'s reception in Sicily is closely intertwined with its reception in Naples. Underpinning the adaptation of Ariosto's romance to music, courtly dynamics dictated the predilection for its lyrical parts, especially laments, and sententious parts, such as the

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<sup>340</sup> Salvatore di Cataldo, *Tutti i principii de canti dell'Ariosto posti in musica* (Venice: Scoto, 1559). Pietro Havente, *Madrigali di Pietro Havente musico dell'illustrissimo S. marchesae di Pietrapertia et ad esso signore dedicati. Libro primo* (Venice: [n.p.], 1556).

<sup>341</sup> Di Cataldo, A1<sup>v</sup>. Martoretta, *Il secondo libro*..., p. xxvi. On Terracina's work see the Introduction.

<sup>342</sup> About Pietro Vinci see Paolo Emilio Carapezza and Giuseppe Collisani. 'Vinci, Pietro', in *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press. [accessed 26 April 2017] <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/29425>>.

openings of each canto. Such a process of adaptation went beyond the simple act of setting to music Ariosto's stanzas: the change of function implied by the new medium, music, productively inscribed them within a new compositional frame in which they acquired a new meaning, as in the case of Martoretta's cycle of madrigals dedicated to the death of Mendoza's daughter.

While arguably the most prominent, the Moncada were not the only Sicilian aristocratic family whose court was distinguished by cultural patronage. Like the Moncada, the Ventimiglia were also the recipients of prestigious positions in the Sicilian government. Simone Ventimiglia was *presidente del regno* three times in 1516, 1535 e 1541, his son Giovanni II Ventimiglia was *stratigotus* (chief city magistrate) of Messina in 1532, 1533, 1539, 1540 and Giovanni III was also *stratigotus* of Messina 1588, 1595 and president of the Kingdom in 1595-1598 and 1606-7. They were also a family of cultural and literary patrons throughout the century. Giovanni II Ventimiglia was the patron of the scientist, poet and historian Francesco Maurolico and the physician Gianfilippo Ingrassia; Giovanni III financially supported Torquato Tasso and the playwright Giovan Donato Lombardo, known as Bitontino.<sup>343</sup> It is to Giovanni III that Vincenzo Marino dedicates his re-envisioning of the *Furioso*, a dedication that will be discussed in Part Five. The literary and artistic patronage of the Ventimiglia and the Moncada, which were arguably the most important and influential aristocratic families promoting courtly patronage in Sicily, shows that Sicilian courtly culture was vibrant and receptive of the Italian coeval developments and tastes, including an early appreciation for Ariosto's poem.

## **8. ARIOSTO IN MIDDLE CLASS SICILY IN THE 1550S: THE CASE OF PAOLO CAGGIO'S *ICONOMICA* AND A SERIES OF DRAWINGS**

### **8.1 Paolo Caggio's *Iconomica* (1553) and the dissemination of *Orlando furioso* between secular and religious environments**

If the favour of the aristocracy for *Orlando furioso* is not surprising considering that the poem itself was composed for a courtly environment, the evidence of its presence and dissemination in middle-class secular and religious environments is more striking, and

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<sup>343</sup> On Ingrassia and Maurolico I refer to: Cesare Preti, 'Ingrassia, Giovanni Filippo', in *DBI*, LXII (2004), pp. 396-399; Rosario Moscheo, 'Maurolico, Francesco', in *DBI*, LXXII (2008), pp. 404- 411. On the Ventimiglia family see Orazio Cancila, *I Ventimiglia di Geraci (1258-1619)*, Quaderni di Mediterranea, 30, 2 vols (Palermo: Associazione Mediterranea, 2016).

indicative of the extent to which the middle-classes assumed court tastes, which spread beyond elite environments. Evidence of the presence of Ariosto's poem in middle-class culture is indeed found in one of Paolo Caggio's dialogical treatises as well as in a group of drawings representing episodes from the *Furioso*. Though there were no editions of Ariosto's romance printed in Sicily, the cases discussed here point to a wide diffusion of the poem in the island. These cases, both dating back to the 1550s, are rather different in terms of location (Palermo and Catania) and cultural significance (Caggio was a prominent academician, while the creator of the drawings is unknown). It is because of such differences that they provide evidence not only of the dissemination of the *Furioso* in Sicily but also of the ways it was received in the Sicilian middle class.

As anticipated in 6.2, Paolo Caggio mentions Ariosto's poem in one of his works: the mention of the *Furioso* in *Iconomica* (1552) is brief but meaningful. A dialogue on family following the tradition of the manuals for domestic management, *Iconomica*<sup>344</sup> features two main characters, the student Monofilo and the wise master Apollonio, who discuss matters of family and marriage. Apollonio gives the young Monofilo advice on many related issues, such as the desirable qualities of a wife and the proper treatment of servants. Given its colloquial nature, the dialogue touches on many topics and provides insights into the bourgeois society of Palermo, to which the jurist Caggio belongs. Apollonio and Monofilo support their arguments by citing other models, the main one unsurprisingly being Petrarch, and it is in relation to Petrarch that Ariosto is mentioned in two instances. In the second chapter, while discussing the matter of love, Monofilo mentions to Apollonio his habit of conversing with nuns. When asked what he gains from his interactions with them, Monofilo replies:

O, allegrezze grandi, conforti innumerabili, consolationi infinite se ne ritraeno da queste pratiche. [...] Poi ne ragionamenti famigliari, perché sono superbuzze, e voglion esser tenute per la sapienza del mondo, subito (informate da qualche puttagnuola, che pratica nel monistero) vi saltano con alcune rime del Furioso, che se voi, non siete ben'accorto in un tratto pigliano la pastura de' fatti vostri. E talora si diviene nelle belle dispute, sopra il Petrarca<sup>345</sup>

Monofilo further clarifies that the subjects they discuss concern the role and attitude of Laura, thus showing that the nuns were fully familiar with both Petrarch and Ariosto. However, his literary discussions with nuns are met with harsh criticism by Apollonio,

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<sup>344</sup> Paolo Caggio, *Iconomica del signor Paolo Caggio gentil'huomo di Palermo, nella quale s'insegna brevemente per modo di dialogo il governo familiare [...]* (Venice: Arrivabene, 1552). It was re-printed by the same publisher in 1553.

<sup>345</sup> Caggio, *Iconomica*, F7<sup>v</sup>.

who deems such subjects unworthy of women consecrated to praise God's glory. Thus he reprimands Monofilo:

e ti par cosa ragionevole, che con le donne caste, et elette, perche nella integrità della lor vita dovessero lodare, santificare, essaltare, et invocare il nome del Signore, ne gli hinni, ne i salmi, ne' canti, e nelle orationi continue, se le debbia ragionar, de i gesti di paladini, e de gli amori de i poeti? Ah vergognati Monofilo<sup>346</sup>

Apollonio's words show that Petrarch's love poetry and Ariosto's chivalric adventures are subjects considered unsuitable to cloistered life. Considering that Caggio (and his characters Monofilo and Apollonio) regards Petrarch as the main model for vernacular poetry, this criticism is clearly directed at the nuns rather than the two authors. By defining the nuns as 'scopachioistri'<sup>347</sup> in a clearly derogatory way and accusing them of a secular lifestyle, Caggio implies the incompatibility between reading Ariosto and Petrarch, and religious life. Moreover, it appears that the nuns learned to recite verses of the *Furioso* from prostitutes ('informate da qualche puttagnuola'), a fact which reinforces the association of *Orlando furioso* with the worldly sphere in opposition to the religious one. This suggests a fully lay reception of Ariosto's romance in the 1550s, before the Council of Trent and the publication of the Tridentine Index.

This approach is consistent with Caggio's project of literary and cultural innovation. The founder of the Solitari academy, Caggio was pivotal in the promotion of the Florentine of Dante and Petrarch and the Italian literary tradition on the island: he gave lectures on Petrarch's sonnets<sup>348</sup> and wrote all his works in Italian. Moreover, his dialogues *Iconomica* (1552) and *Ragionamenti* (1551) and his dialogic novella *La Flaminia prudente* (1551), as well as some of his sonnets were not published in his homeland but in the main Italian publishing centre, Venice.<sup>349</sup> Aiming at aligning Sicily with the mainland's literary tradition, Caggio adopted Italian vernacular models in linguistic as well as cultural terms, as Paolo Procaccioli has demonstrated with regard to Pietro Aretino, with whom Caggio also had epistolary contacts.<sup>350</sup> Canonised vernacular authors such as Petrarch and Ariosto were appropriated in a programme of literary and

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<sup>346</sup> Caggio, *Iconomica*, F8<sup>r</sup>-F8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>347</sup> Caggio, *Iconomica*, F7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>348</sup> Pietro Mazzamuto, pp. 298-299.

<sup>349</sup> Paolo Caggio, *Ragionamenti di Paolo Chaggio di Palermo, ne quali egli introduce tre suoi amici, che naturalmente discorrono [...] in veder se la vita cittadina sia più felice, del viver solitario fuor le città, e nelle ville.* (Venice: Arrivabene, 1551); *Flamminia prudente. Novelletta di Paolo Chaggio, composta per capriccio, & a commun diletto de gli amici* (Venice: Arrivabene, 1551). Caggio's sonnets were published in some anthologies: see Zaggia, I, pp. 364-366.

<sup>350</sup> Paolo Procaccioli, 'Ad "Aretinum per Aristotelem". Intorno a Paolo Caggio "allievo" e corrispondente siciliano di Aretino', *Rinascimento meridionale* 1 (2010), 85-97.

cultural renovation connected with the Academy and civic life, an environment very different from the religious one with which they were incompatible.

Furthermore, Ariosto and Petrarch are mentioned together again in another very brief textual passage, which particularly highlights the significance of the *Furioso* as a literary model. Monofilo criticises students for their vanity and self-importance and is reminded by Apollonio that by doing so he is also referring to himself; Apollonio then calls for more indulgence by quoting Petrarch (*Rvf* CCVII):

Apollonio: si vogliono escusare, che son giovani.  
Monofilo: che 'n giovenil fallire, è men vergogna.  
Apollonio: sì disse l'Ariosto.  
Monofilo: anzi il Petrarca  
Apollonio: il Petrarca, è vero.<sup>351</sup>

This brief exchange implies that Ariosto was used as a source of sententious expressions and that he was considered on a par with Petrarch, with whom he could be confused. His name had achieved such a prestigious reputation in Sicilian middle-class culture that he could be equated with the vernacular model for poetry. By the early 1550s, not only was Ariosto known in middle-class educated environments, as demonstrated by Monofilo and Apollonio, who mentions Ariosto as an authority albeit erroneously, but the *Furioso* was also well-known among diverse groups such as nuns and prostitutes. Caggio's mention of Ariosto shows that the *Furioso* was not only a popular work across different social classes but also a literary model whose authority within the canon was connected to its being an established model of Italian vernacular.

## 8.2 The visual commentary of *Orlando furioso* in a bureaucratic deed from Catania

The dissemination of *Orlando furioso* among the Sicilian middle class is also proved by a more mysterious document in which the *Furioso* is referred to visually. The presence of hand-made drawings representing episodes of the poem on a notarial deed from Catania was discovered and analysed by Carmelina Naselli in 1941. The drawings appear on a parchment covering the deeds of a notary from Paternò. The deeds were reorganised by a notary from Catania who was active in the 1550s so that, even though it is not possible to know the exact date of the drawings, it is likely that they were completed in the same period (Fig. 1).<sup>352</sup> The artist's drawings represent three episodes from the *Furioso* (Fig. 2), identified by Naselli as the duel between Mandricardo and Ruggiero

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<sup>351</sup> Caggio, *Iconomica*, A8<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>352</sup> Naselli, p. 218-220. The drawings are provided in the Appendix.

from *Of* XXX, 53-60 (the largest drawing), the assembly of Agramante with other kings, likely from *Of* XXXVIII, 35-64, represented above the duel, and a paladin fighting a monster, possibly Rinaldo fighting the monster in the Ardenne forest from *Of* XLII, 44-52 (on the back of the seal). The duel between Mandricardo and Ruggiero in canto 30, which is the main focus, was usually illustrated in prominent editions of the poem, where, however, the iconographic approach was slightly different.

Naselli points out that it is likely that the inspiration for the drawings came from one of the illustrated editions of the *Furioso* even though, according to her, only the central episode of the duel was the subject of illustration.<sup>353</sup> However, a closer examination of the mid-Cinquecento editions of the *Furioso* shows that Rinaldo's adventure in the Ardenne forest was illustrated in the Valgrisi edition of 1553 and, furthermore, that the meeting of Agramante, Marsilio and Sobrino before the duel in canto XXX is one of the moments composing the visual narration of the episode in the same edition. The drawing representing Agramante with his kings is thus more likely to refer to the episode of the duel rather than to canto XXXVIII as suggested by Naselli, who supports such identification on the grounds of the greater relevance of the assembly of canto XXXVIII for the poem's plot compared with canto XXX.<sup>354</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that unlike the case of canto XXX, in none of the illustrations is the assembly of Agramante with Marsilio and Sobrino from canto XXXVIII represented.

At the centre of these drawings is a cup with a heart pierced by a sword and a winged Cupid, accompanied on its right by a smaller drawing representing the classical myth of Ganymede. Naselli regards the former as a reference to the love of Mandricardo and Doralice and the latter as an indirect reference to Bradamante's astonishment at Ruggiero's flying away on the hippogriff (*Of* IV, 47).<sup>355</sup> However, the myth of Ganymede, the beautiful Trojan youth kidnapped by Zeus transformed into an eagle, is mentioned by Ariosto himself in reference to the quarrel between Mandricardo and Ruggiero, who both carry the same emblem, that is to say a white eagle. This emblem has particular significance since it is symbolically connected to the Trojan hero Hector, from whom Ruggiero (and consequently the Este family) is descended. As Ruggiero and Mandricardo share the white eagle as their emblem, this becomes a cause of contention between the two Saracens. In canto XXVI Mandricardo sees Ruggiero's emblem and, enraged, challenges him:

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<sup>353</sup> Naselli, pp. 208-215; for a general comparison with the decorated editions see pp. 222-223.

<sup>354</sup> Naselli, p. 213.

<sup>355</sup> Naselli, p. 209, 215.

Nel campo azzur l'acquila bianca avea,  
che de' Troiani fu l'insegna bella:  
perché Ruggier l'origine traea  
dal fortissimo Ettor, portava quella.  
Ma questo Mandricardo non sapea;  
né vuol patire, e grande ingiuria appella,  
che ne lo scudo un altro debba porre  
l'acquila bianca del famoso Ettorre.

Portava Mandricardo similmente  
l'augel che rapì in Ida Ganimede.  
Come l'ebbe quel dì che fu vincente  
al castel periglioso, per mercede,  
credo vi sia con l'altre istorie a mente,  
e come quella fata gli lo diede  
con tutte le bell'arme che Vulcano  
avea già date al cavallier troiano.

*Of XXVI, 99-100*

The myth of Ganymede is here recalled with reference to the symbol of Trojan origin claimed by both Ruggiero and Mandricardo for different reasons. The question of the emblem is then brought to the attention of Agramante, who decides to solve the grievances of his knights through a series of duels, including one between Ruggiero and Mandricardo. Since the specific purpose of the duel between the two Saracens is to establish who has the right to display the symbol of the Trojan eagle, the representation of the myth of Ganymede, strictly connected with the symbol as recalled by Ariosto, is likely to be a further reference to the duel rather than an allusion to Bradamante's thoughts as proposed by Naselli.

The creator of these drawings, then, appears to have been fully familiar with Ariosto's text, as he was displaying a series of references to the quarrel between Ruggiero and Mandricardo both in the main drawing representing the duel and in the complementary ones, including the pierced cup. As for the drawing of Rinaldo's encounter with the monster in the Ardenne forest, it is possible that the choice of this episode was due to its significance with regard to the theme of love, which is also symbolised by the cup: the monster represents jealousy and Rinaldo, saved by a knight representing disdain (*Sdegno*), eventually manages to overcome his love for Angelica by drinking from the magic spring which transforms love into hate (*Of XLII, 63-67*). Thus, arms and love are equally represented by the unknown creator, who understood the two main themes underpinning the *Furioso's* narrative.

Given their complex relation to the source text, these drawings reveal an in-depth knowledge of the poem as well as the creator's personal enthusiasm for Ariosto's chivalric adventures, which he reproduced visually for his own amusement. Naselli, who



highlights the figurative nature of this document, goes as far as hypothesising a process of figurative commentary passing from the higher classes to the lower ones.<sup>356</sup> As these drawings represent the only case of a comment with pictures, it is not possible to corroborate this theory. Certainly, however, the figurative success of the *Furioso* highlighted by recent studies, as seen in the Introduction, was an important factor in the concept of such visual commentary. Furthermore, the presence of episodes from the *Furioso* in a context not connected with aristocratic courts or academic circles, and indeed apparently not connected to any literary or artistic *milieu*, provides significant evidence of the dissemination and creative reception of *Orlando furioso* in Sicily.

## 9. ORLANDO FURIOSO IN LYRIC POETRY IN VERNACULAR: GIUSEPPE CUMIA'S *RIME* (1562)

As already exemplified by Paolucci's poem and implied in Caggio's treatise, the status of the *Furioso* as a vernacular model resulted in its penetration into new genres, especially lyric poetry. Because of the association of Ariosto with the lyrical model of Petrarch rather than with the romance tradition, the appropriation of the *Furioso* by Sicilian poets was distinguished by a shift of literary genre from romance/epic to lyric. Thus, references to the *Furioso* can be found in the lyric poetry of Giuseppe Cumia (1531-1593 ca), generally known for his role in establishing the first typography in Catania, as previously mentioned in 6.2. In his collection of poems in vernacular based on Petrarch's model, Cumia unusually appropriates elements deriving from very different traditions and adapts them to the conventional lyric mode, so that his poetry (*Rime*, 1562) provides a significant exemplification of the dissemination of the *Furioso* in Sicilian literary culture and its transformation from romance to lyric.

A jurist from Catania, Giuseppe Cumia was a lecturer of civil law at the *studium* of the city for most of his life. Published in Sicily as well as Venice, his production deals mainly with civil law issues with the exception of the *Rime*, which are his only vernacular work.<sup>357</sup> He himself printed his *canzoniere* in his own house, as recalled in his poems.

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<sup>356</sup> Naselli, p. 228.

<sup>357</sup> Giuseppe Cumia, *Practica syndicatus cum theorica* (Catania: 1568)-(Venice: Comenzini, 1574); *Rime di Ioseppe Cumia* (Catania: Spira and Cumia, 1562). This edition is held in the British Library and, according to Giuseppe Repici, was almost certainly printed in 1563. Of the *Rime* there are three octavo editions, one dated 1563 and two dated 1562, including the one I cite. Giuseppe Repici, 'Cumia, Giuseppe', *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani. Il Cinquecento*, ed. by Marco Menato, Ennio Sandal and Giuseppina Zappella, I, pp. 349-350. Cumia's activity as a printer is limited to the years 1562-1568. His main work, the *Practica syndicatus cum theorica*, was printed four times, once in Catania and three times in Venice.

Indeed, it was in order to print his own poems that Cumia established a printing press in Catania, at first with the support of printer Petruccio Spira, who worked predominantly in Messina and Palermo. The *Rime* consist mostly of sonnets (138), which occasionally alternate with *canzoni* (6), but include also two *capitoli in terza rima*, an *ottava* and a *sestina*, for a total of 148 poems; they do not feature dedicatory poems either at the beginning or at the end of the collection. Following the Petrarchan fashion which was popular in Italy at the time, they form a *canzoniere* dedicated to the poet's personal experience of existential development, especially with regard to love. Thus, his poetic experience is specifically connected to, and begins with, the death of his beloved wife, Agata, and then progresses towards reflections on the vanity of life. Cumia's Petrarchism, which is evident especially in some thematic and linguistic choices, is reworked within a realistic framework combining elements from different traditions, including the chivalric one in general and Ariosto in particular. As pointed out by Mazzamuto, such a realistic framework is typical of Sicilian Petrarchism, while Cumia in particular employs mythological and chivalric images to add a fantastic dimension to his *canzoniere*.<sup>358</sup>

Generic chivalric images are sometimes embedded within typically Petrarchan tropes. In a sonnet dealing with the traditional personification of Fortune and Love as enemies of the poet, Cumia represents them as jousting knights:

Come speram goder, se ne dimostra,  
chi conobbe del ciel l'alta influentia;  
quell'infalibili detto: in patientia  
possiederete voi l'anima vostra.

Ecco Fortuna, e Amor, che con noi giostra;  
e l'una e l'altro con tanta potentia,  
che non ne giova natural prudentia  
di punto riparar la vita nostra.

Ecco n'aggiunge la percossa rea;  
s'aitarne scudo di patientia tarda,  
altr'arme al fiero scontro non son fide;

che con l'hasta fatal la 'nstabill dea,  
e Amor appresso vien con Balisarda;  
e Fortuna m'abbatte, e Amor m'ancide.

*Rime*, LXXXVII<sup>359</sup>

<sup>358</sup> Mazzamuto, p. 301. Mazzamuto, who briefly mentions Cumia, is the only one to have dedicated scholarly attentions to Cumia's poetry to date.

<sup>359</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, K1<sup>v</sup>.

The poet presents himself as the helpless victim of two knights who are jousting ('con noi giostra') and describes the fight in chivalric terms by referring to wounds ('percossa rea') and arms ('scudo di patientia', 'hasta fatal', 'Balisarda'). The mention of Balisarda, Ruggiero's sword, highlights the invincibility of love since the sword, forged by the sorceress Falerina, has the magical ability to break any spell. Distinct chivalric elements here overlap with traditional lyrical tropes and as a result transform the latter into a new image clearly identifiable as chivalric.

This overlapping of traditions and images also characterises the definition of Fortune in another instance: in a sonnet dedicated to the cruelty of fate, Cumia describes Fortune as a sorceress who traps her victims through powerful enchantments: 'Non ebbe il mondo mai più dotta maga | che far sapesse incanto così fiero | per prender o donzella, o cavallero | e darle un'aspra et insanabil piaga' (*Rime*, CXXVIII).<sup>360</sup> The personification of Fortune as a powerful enchantress through such lexical choices (a 'maga' casts an 'incanto' which entraps 'donzella o cavallero') recalls the image of the evil sorceress who ensnares heroines and heroes in chivalric poems, the most known Renaissance examples being Falerina in Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* (II, IV-V) and Alcina, who features both in the *Innamorato* and the *Furioso* (*Oi* II, IV-V; *Of* VI-VII). However, while Falerina and Alcina's victims are usually knights, the victims of Fortune include women as well so that the depiction of Fortune might rather evoke Atlante and his first castle, where 'il mago tien le donne e i cavallieri' (*Of* IV, 12). Different images then are grafted on each other, the evil sorceress, the magician Atlante and the conventional personification of Fortune, and as a result the chivalric trope of the magician keeping his victims captive through magical means takes on a broader existential meaning.<sup>361</sup>

References to the chivalric tradition, which can also be found in poems dealing more specifically with the poet's individual experience, reveal Cumia's appropriation of Boiardo and Ariosto. Beside the death of his wife, Cumia often mentions specific events in his life, including his travels in Sicily and the establishment of his typography. Recalling his experience as a printer ('stampator son fatto di dottore') Cumia gives an account of the beginning of his enterprise, mentioning that he had to sell his horse in order to hasten his progress: 'e per star più espedito il destrier vendo; | che sol m'avea restato, e fummi charo | più di Frontin, Baiardo, o Brigliadoro, | o qual tolse Diomede ad Enea, e Reso' (*Rime*, CXXXVII).<sup>362</sup> The mention of the horses of Ruggiero, Rinaldo and Orlando

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<sup>360</sup> Cumia, P1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>361</sup> The theme of enchantment is also developed in another sonnet (CXVII) where the poet compares his condition to that of the victim of magical illusions (Cumia, *Rime*, O1<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>362</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, Q3<sup>r</sup>.

together with the Homeric episodes of Diomedes and Aeneas and Diomedes and Rhesus, incorporated within the poem's narrative, adds a poignant as well as fantastical dimension to the narration of the personal experience of the poet. Furthermore, since Orlando's horse is named Brigliadoro for the first time by Boiardo (*Oi* II, IV 28; previously the name was Vegliantino), who is followed by Ariosto, it is clear that Cumia had in mind the romance tradition of the *Innamorato* and the *Furioso*: the association of the legendary horses of Boiardo and Ariosto with those of an episode from classical epic results in the connection of the two literary traditions, which are then equally grafted on the lyrical discourse.

Cumia's operation of grafting chivalric images onto lyrical discourse results in the incorporation of the *Furioso* into a literary lineage with canonical authors such as Dante and Petrarch. This is particularly evident in a canzone dedicated to the praise of the poet's late wife Agata, whose death conventionally acts as a poetical catalyst. However, while dedicating poems to a dead beloved was a common feature of Cinquecento Petrarchism, besides the Petrarchan references to the poems *in morte* of Laura, Agata's death is recalled in terms oscillating between idealism and realism. Thus Cumia writes of how his wife's death was a consequence of childbirth, of her last words while she was sick in bed, of the sorrow of the family after her loss as well as the appearance of her spirit in his dreams, where she takes on a role of spiritual guidance like that of Dante's Beatrice. Agata is therefore praised as exemplary for her virtues (Cumia dedicates eight stanzas to her praise) and worthy of being immortalised in poetry like Dante's Beatrice, Petrarch's Laura and Ariosto's Isabella.<sup>363</sup>

qual di Bice, Laura, e d'Issabella,  
hor *si celebra il nome inclito e degno*;  
per cui *Parnaso, e Pindo* aprì la buccia;  
così *Helicon* per te anima bella,  
mentre volgerà il sol di segno in segno,  
*suonerà sempre Agatuccia Agatuccia*<sup>1</sup>

*Rime*, XXXV

Per l'avvenir vo' che ciascuna c'haggia  
il nome tuo, sia di sublime ingegno,  
e sia bella, gentil, cortese e saggia,  
e di vera onestade arrivi al segno:  
onde materia agli scrittori caggia  
di *celebrare il nome inclito e degno*;  
tal che *Parnasso, Pindo et Elicone*  
*sempre Issabella, Issabella risuone*.

*Of* XXIX, 29

The poet's wife is compared to literary female models whose common feature is the eternal fame they enjoy through their lovers' poetry. It is noteworthy, however, that Bice

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<sup>363</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, D3<sup>r</sup>.

can refer both to Dante's Beatrice and the Egyptian queen Berenice.<sup>364</sup> However, the mention of Petrarch's Laura suggests the identification of Bice with Dante's Beatrice, especially when considering Agata's death. Similarly, the poetic consecration after death indicates that Cumia's Isabella refers to Ariosto's character, who in the *Furioso* is praised after her suicide as an example of marital virtue (*Of* XXIX, 26-29). Other more textually explicit factors support this interpretation, such as the mention of Parnassus, Pindus and Helicon together with the repetition of the name resonating in the mountains of the Muses, as emphasised.

While the name resounding in the mounts of the Muses is a classical *topos* of lyric poetry, its presence in conjunction with the mention of the name Isabella is an allusion to Ariosto. The allusion to the *Furioso* is more explicit in the last verse of Cumia's sonnet, which appears to be modelled on the closing line of Ariosto's stanza, with the difference that its syntactic elements are disposed in a different order and that the use of the hypocorism 'Agatuccia' colours the poem with a more personal and intimate tone.

More importantly, the act of poetic consecration is expressed through an almost literal quotation of Ariosto, as I have highlighted: 'celebrare il nome inclito e degno'. In the *Furioso*, God establishes that Isabella's namesakes will be forever associated with feminine virtues and therefore worthy of poetic consecration, thus making her a divinely-established eternal example (*Of* XXIX, 28-29). Cumia aligns the chivalric heroine Isabella with the lyrical characters Beatrice and Laura, both praised by their lover-poets, and includes his beloved Agata in this genealogical tradition of women celebrated by canonical vernacular authors. Unlike Beatrice and Laura, however, Isabella's exemplary nature stems from her fidelity to her husband, so that Ariosto's heroine has more in common with Agata than Beatrice and Laura and thus acts as a link between the lyrical tradition of Dante and Petrarch and Cumia's poetry. Not only, then, does Cumia appropriate Ariosto's texts, but he also adapts it to his own poetic aims by inscribing it in a direct line of lyrical lineage uniting Dante, Petrarch and Ariosto.

Images of the *Furioso* are also evoked through citations of Ariosto's verses inserted into the lyrical structure of a poem in a more complex fashion. In connection to the praise of Agata, whose death has deprived the world of an angelic being, Cumia employs the image of the enchanted castle. In a poem he compares the loss of his wife to the disappearance of Atlante's magical castle. A canzone of seven stanzas, the poem is built

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<sup>364</sup> Berenice vowed to offer a lock of hair to Aphrodite for the safe return of her husband, Ptolemy III Euergetes, from war; at the mysterious disappearance of her hair, the court astronomer Conon of Samos explained that it had been placed among the stars. Berenice's story is the subject of one of Catullus's elegies (poem 66). Catullus took the subject from the Greek poet Callimachus.

around poetic analogies describing the aftermath of Agata's death. Thus, for instance, the loss of the poet's wife is compared to the loss of orientation of the helmsman when the stars are obscured and the navigation instruments are lost, an analogy which is explicitly based on the conventional representation of the beloved's eyes as bright stars. The sixth stanza, which follows the one with the helmsman metaphor, develops the conventional lyrical praise of the poet's beloved through the chivalric image of an enchanted place likened to Atlante's castle:<sup>365</sup>

Qual colle, ove castello per incanto,  
vi sia con tutto il gaudio del mondo  
*suoni, canti, vestir, giochi, vivande*  
o giardin, che lo renda dolce canto  
d'augelli dilettevole, e giocondo,  
*o, che cuor pensio, che bocca domande,*  
di gioie piene sian tutte le bande;  
*s'alcuno spezza la ov'è 'l fuoco accolto*  
*o vasi, o fumant'olle,*  
a un tratto ogni diletto e piacer tolle,  
*e resta il loco inhospite, et incolto;*  
qual fu d'Atlante lo 'ncantato colle.  
sì deserto riman d'ogniuna il viso,  
che mirava il bel volto,  
ov'era tutto il ben del paradiso.

*Rime*, XVIII

Pur ch'uscir di là su non si domande,  
d'ogn'altro gaudio lor cuor mi tocca;  
che quanto averne da tutte le bande  
si può del mondo, è tutto in quella rocca:  
*suoni, canti, vestir, giuochi, vivande,*  
*quanto può cor pensar, può chieder bocca.*  
Ben seminato avea, ben cogliea il frutto;  
Ma tu sei giunto a disturbarmi il tutto.

[...]

Di su la soglia Atlante un sasso toglie,  
di caratteri e strani segni isculto.  
*Sotto, vasi vi son, che chiamano olle,*  
che fuman sempre, e dentro han foco occulto.  
*L'incantator le spezza; e a un tratto il colle*  
*riman deserto, inhospite et inculto;*  
né muro appar né torre in alcun lato,  
come se mai castel non vi sia stato.

*Of IV*, 32, 38

In *Orlando furioso*, in order to keep Ruggiero from fulfilling his destiny, the magician Atlante creates two castles, which both eventually vanish. However, as we can grasp from the very literal quotes from Ariosto's text which he employs, Cumia refers specifically to the first one, from which Bradamante rescues Ruggiero by forcing Atlante to make the castle disappear in canto IV.

Textual similarities and even literal quotations, as emphasised, show not only that Cumia explicitly refers to Ariosto's text but also that he appropriates and employs the original image in an unconventional way, signalling permanence and change simultaneously. Passing from the chivalric tradition to the lyrical one, the image of Atlante's enchanted castle assumes a new connotation: the necromancer's illusion has here a positive significance, as it is not a trapping device but a metaphor for the death of

<sup>365</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, C1<sup>r</sup>. This is the first canzone in the collection.

the poet's beloved. Though Agata is implicitly connected to Atlante as the creator of the illusion, her illusion does not derive from magical powers but is the natural consequence of her divine nature. Thus, the romance magic of Atlante overlaps with the lyrical trope of the angelic woman.

Furthermore, in the same poem the image of the enchanted palace is anticipated in the fourth stanza, where Cumia makes also biblical references to Enoch, Elias and Samson, recalling the *Furioso*:<sup>366</sup>

Qual trionfante, e splendido palatio,  
posto su una colonna di rubino  
abbia mura di gemme, e tetti d'oro,  
uscio d'avorio, e scala di topatio,  
sembri un di sette moli, o quel divino,  
dov'Enoch, et Elia portati foro;  
dentro con harmonia il pierio choro,  
ingombri il cuor di tutte le persone,  
ch'ivi a diletto stanno,  
senza sospetto di futuro inganno.  
S'un tolga la colonna, qual Sansone,  
si volge il riso in pianto; oh grave danno  
sì fu rompendo morte la colonna,  
ch'è stata la cagione,  
ch'io più nel mondo non ami altra donna

*Rime*, XVIII

Surgea un palazzo in mezzo alla pianura,  
ch'acceso pareva esser di fiamma viva:  
tanto splendore intorno e tanto lume  
raggiava, fuor d'ogni mortal costume.

[...]

Come egli è presso al luminoso tetto,  
attonito riman di maraviglia;  
che tutto d'una gemma è 'l muro schietto,  
più che carbonchio lucida e vermiglia.  
O stupenda opra, o dedalo architetto!  
Qual fabrica tra noi le rassimiglia?  
Taccia qualunque le mirabil sette  
moli del mondo in tanta gloria mette.

*Of XXXIV*, 51, 53

The description of the palace, likened to that of Enoch and Elias, is evocative of a passage from canto XXXIV of *Orlando furioso*. In canto XXXIV, Astolfo arrives on earthly paradise and finds an astonishingly beautiful palace, where St John, Enoch and Elias welcome him (*Of XXXIV*, 54-60). The palace, Ariosto clarifies, is so extraordinary in its beauty that it cannot be compared to the Seven Wonders of the World. St John then explains to Astolfo that his otherworldly travel is ordained by God and that God is punishing Orlando for the paladin's transgression after he has gifted him with superhuman strength to defend the Christians like he did Samson to defend the Jews. All these elements can also be found in stanza 6 of the canzone, where the palace Cumia refers to bears a clear resemblance, and is compared, to the one depicted by Ariosto. Moreover, the mentions of Enoch, Elias and Samson are also reminiscent of Ariosto's passage. More specifically, Samson is referenced for his act of pulling down the pillars of the temple of the Philistines and destroying it thanks to his extraordinary strength. The

<sup>366</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, B4<sup>r</sup>-B4<sup>v</sup>.

last three verses of the stanza clarify how the death of Agata is akin to the fall of Cumia's palace: the poet, like the palace, finds himself deprived of his pillar, and therefore shall not be able to love any other woman. Chivalric images overlap with biblical references and both are incorporated within the lyrical structure of the poem.

Cumia's appropriation of the episode of the liberation of Ruggiero from Atlante's castle is quite singular when considering the allegorical meaning usually attached to the episode by Ariosto's commentators. In Giolito's edition of 1542, Bradamante's rescue of Ruggiero from Atlante is read as the victory of virtue and reason over deceit.<sup>367</sup> In Valvassori's edition of 1553 Atlante is considered the symbol of carnal love: 'Atlante, che rapisce e seco ne porta prigioniere le belle donne, significa il nostro affetto carnale, che in tutto spoglia della libertà l'anime nostre'.<sup>368</sup> In both cases Bradamante and her ring allegorically represent the liberating power of reason. More importantly, such allegorical interpretations clearly attach a negative connotation to Atlante's magical illusion. Its presence within Cumia's lyrical discourse, however, implies the attribution of a positive significance due to the shift from the chivalric narrative to the Petrarchan lyrical tradition of Platonic influence. Cumia evokes Ariosto's words but dislodges his images and recasts them in the context of a different genre. While citations and allusions implicitly confer authority onto the *Furioso* as well as to Cumia's poetry, the Sicilian poet is revisioning well-defined places from Ariosto's romance, specifically Atlante's castle and St John's palace, thus re-proposing them through transformation.

Furthermore, Cumia also refers to episodes of the *Furioso* in a more reflective way that shows a deep understanding of Ariosto's romance. In particular, the Sicilian poet refers to the episodes of Astolfo's flight to the moon and Ruggiero's proposed enterprise towards the end of the *Furioso* (canto XLIV, 76-78). Astolfo's journey to the moon to retrieve Orlando's wit is mentioned together with myths relating to flying and of travelling to the underworld. The sonnet, through which Cumia begs for Agata's return from death, begins with a reference to the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. The poet's situation, however, is rather different as Agata surely is not below the earth like Eurydice but above it in heaven ('nel ciel superno'), so that the poet wishes he had the wings of the winged brothers Calais and Zetes. Eventually, though, the poet states that he does not need to ride a winged steed: 'Ma a che ciò dico, so, che m'intend'hora | senza ch'io poggi con destrier alato, | come chi poi fu al cerchio dela Luna.'<sup>369</sup> The flight of Astolfo is thus

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<sup>367</sup> Giolito 1542, B4<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>368</sup> Valvassori 1553, B8<sup>r</sup> (also in the 1566 edition).

<sup>369</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, E2<sup>v</sup>. This is poem XLIV.



inserted in a series of mythological elements related to a fantastic journey to the underworld; these references follow a progressive vertical pattern from the underworld experience of Orpheus to Astolfo's adventure on the moon. The series of mythological and chivalric echoes ends with a religious reference to the rising of Lazarus, which the poet wishes for his wife too. Though in different versions, these mythological and biblical episodes share the theme of the journey to and from the underworld, a journey which also starts Astolfo's adventure on the moon.

In the case of Ruggiero's intentions from canto XLIV Cumia reprises Ariosto's own reflections. He further develops the theme of fortune and builds his sonnet on the exemplarity of Ruggiero's plan:<sup>370</sup>

Qual fu l'altiera impresa di Ruggiero,  
che per parer di Bradamante degno,  
solo deporre il re pensò del regno,  
e lui poi coronarsi del impero;  
punto il mio disegno fu sì altiero,  
fidato ne le forze del mio ingegno,  
tal, che m'ammiro quando a pensar vegno,  
come in cor m'habbia entrato tal pensiero.  
Già lui l'havea riuscito, se Fortuna  
non vi dimostrava così avversa,  
benché poi mitigate il fe contento.  
Et anchor io n'avea riuscit'una,  
se non guastava lei, pur io pavento,  
che fuor di me per tutti il giro versa.

*Rime*, CXIX

In canto XLIV Ruggiero, who is rejected as Bradamante's suitor by her parents in favour of Leone, the son of the Emperor of the East, plans on killing his rival and taking his kingdom and therefore joins the Bulgarian army fighting against the Greeks. Eventually, however, Ruggiero is captured by the Greeks and rescued by Leone himself, who greatly admires the paladin's valour. Notably, the beginning of canto XLV revolves around the theme of Fortune. Fortune's wheel, Ariosto reflects, is always turning, so men can find their position in life overturned unpredictably. Ruggiero's sudden change of fate after being recognised by his enemy is further evidence of this:

Ma quella, che non vuol che si prometta  
alcun di lei, gli mostrò in pochi giorni,  
come tosto alzi e tosto al basso metta,  
e tosto avversa e tosto amica torni.  
Lo fe' conoscer quivi da chi in fretta

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<sup>370</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, O2<sup>r</sup>.

a procacciargli andò disagi e scorni,  
dal cavalier che ne la pugna fiera  
di man fuggito a gran fatica gli era.

*Of XLV, 6*

It is implied that the final positive turn of Ruggiero's adventure is also due to the unpredictability of Fortune. Cumia's reference to the episode as exemplary of the instability of fate is thus clearly grounded on Ariosto's own reflections. Cumia compares himself and his enterprise — whose nature is not clearly stated though he is likely referring to the establishment of his print shop in Catania — to Ruggiero's quest to kill Leone and the adventures ensuing. The confidence in their valour is another feature that Cumia and Ariosto's character share and is connected to the overturning of their fate. The poet's aspiration is so high and his confidence so strong that he himself is astonished by his plan ('Punto il mio disegno fu sì altiero | fidato ne le forze del mio ingegno | tal, che m'ammiro quando a pensar vegno | come in cor m'habbia entrato tal pensiero' *Rime*, CXIX) while Ruggiero is so confident in his prowess after the victory against the Greeks that he tries to achieve his mission alone and unaided (*Of XLV, 5*). Thus, Cumia does not simply refer to a passage or episode of the *Furioso* but also reprises the interpretation of said episode given by Ariosto in his comment at the beginning of canto XLV. It is in fact through Ariosto's reflection that Cumia mentions the episode of Ruggiero and Leone grafted on the traditional lyrical theme of Fortune, which is one of the main motifs he explores in the *Rime*.

Cumia's choice of publishing a *canzoniere* raises questions with regard to possible connections with other Petrarchist poets in Sicily. Although his poems are not preceded or followed by complimenting sonnets by other poets or by any forms of poetic exchange, in one sonnet Cumia mentions the name 'il modesto', which is the academic name of Paolo Caggio.<sup>371</sup> This sonnet is written in praise of the dedicatee in a conventional fashion and is followed by another on the same theme. The first poem attests to the relation between Cumia and Caggio as it mentions a gift from the Palermitan academic to the Catanese poet ('Modesto mio cortese ti ringratio | del dono; e duolmi, che non posso ancora | di fuor mostrar mio cor se dentro è largo').<sup>372</sup> The mention of Caggio under his academic name suggests a connection with the Accademia dei Solitari. However, it is not

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<sup>371</sup> Within the academic environment of the Solitari, 'Il modesto' (the modest) was Caggio's nickname. See Salvatore Santangelo, 'Caggio, Paolo', in *DBI*, XVI (1973), pp. 289-292.

<sup>372</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, M4<sup>r</sup>. This is poem CVI. That Cumia is referring to Caggio is clear from the line 'o quanto il nome li convien Modesto'; moreover, the dedicatee is described as 'un dottor gentil honesto' (Caggio was a jurist). It is noteworthy that Cumia published his poems the same year of Caggio's death (1562).

clear whether Cumia was a member of Caggio's academy, as there are no references to an academic name for Cumia himself or to any relations with other members of the academy, and his name does not feature nor it is referenced in the IAD or Montoliu's Sicilian academies database. It is nonetheless clear that he knew Caggio and, from the mention of the exchange of a gift, we can infer that Caggio's works and literary activity very likely influenced his poetic production.

Moreover, in the subsequent sonnet Cumia mentions Ariosto in association with Homer and Virgil. Though the sonnet, which continues the praise of the dedicatee, does not mention him explicitly, it is reasonable to assume that this second poem of praise is likely referring to Caggio as well, especially when considering that Caggio is the only contemporary poet explicitly mentioned in the *Rime* and the only dedicatee of any of the sonnets. Cumia praises the dedicatee for his virtue and inserts him within the classical tradition represented by 'Ariosto, Homero, o Maron' as he is a worthier subject than Achilles, Aeneas and Orlando, and defines him as 'esempio, e splendor del secol nostro'<sup>373</sup> recalling a well-known verse from the *Furioso* (*Of* I, 3, 2). Cumia deploys a clear reference to the encomiastic theme of the *Furioso*, which is the distinguishing feature of the epics of Homer and Virgil. Unlike in the previously discussed cases, the romance tradition is here repressed for the sake of the epic one, as the authority of the *Furioso* is grounded in its epic features rather than its romance ones, so that it is here considered the heir to classical epics. Cumia, then, implicitly represents his poetry as the most recent issue in the lineage of epic poetry.

In Cumia's poetry elements from different traditions tend to accumulate and are incorporated within the poet's lyrical discourse. In particular, Cumia contaminates the Petrarchan tradition with the mythological and chivalric ones. Within this poetic mechanism, *Orlando furioso* features in a variety of ways and its permanence in the lyrical discourse is exhibited to different extents. In some cases generic chivalric images and tropes are evoked through words from the chivalric lexicon. In others, literal citations of verses from the *Furioso* exhibit the derivation from the romance and its simultaneous lyrical metamorphosis. Yet more evident to Ariosto's readers was the relation between the romance and Cumia's evocation of Astolfo's flight and Ruggiero's enterprise. Especially in the latter case the derivation of Cumia's reflections from Ariosto's was particularly recognisable to anyone who was familiar with the *Furioso*. Furthermore, Cumia's association of Ariosto's romance with Petrarch and Dante on the one hand and

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<sup>373</sup> Cumia, *Rime*, M4<sup>v</sup>. This is poem CVII.

with classical epic on the other is indicative of the reception of Ariosto as an adaptable literary model. Cumia's contact with Caggio, moreover, is evidence of his sensitivity towards Tuscan vernacular models. The significant presence of the romance as a poetic model in his lyrical poems indicates that in Sicily *Orlando furioso* was regarded as a Tuscan model on a par with Petrarch and not solely a model for chivalric literature, and thus penetrated such a different genre as lyrical poetry. Its significance as a vernacular model allowed *Orlando furioso* also to penetrate the literary tradition in dialect, where Ariosto's romance resurfaces in the varied production of Antonio Veneziano. Before proceeding to examine Veneziano's poems, however, another work is especially indicative of the presence of *Orlando furioso* as a literary model in mid-Cinquecento Sicily: Marco Filippi's *Vita di Santa Caterina*.<sup>374</sup> This is all the more significant as Filippi was a member of the Solitari like Caggio.

#### 10. MARCO FILIPPI'S *VITA DI SANTA CATERINA* (1562)

The religious poem *Vita di Santa Caterina* by Marco Filippi deserves particular attention not only because the author also wrote the *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto*, examined in Part Two, but also because of its great success as testified by a relevant number of editions (it was printed 11 times between 1570 and 1599).<sup>375</sup> The *Vita di Santa Caterina* was written during Filippi's incarceration in the prison of Castellammare in Palermo and published in 1562; it comprises thirteen cantos and is followed by the *Rime spirituali et alcune stanze della Maddalena a Cristo* by the same author. As previously mentioned, both works are dedicated to Giacomo Fardella, who was also the dedicatee of the *Lettere*. Filippi's choice to write a hagiography is consistent with the abundant literary production focussing on saints in Cinquecento Sicily, which includes works in vernacular, such as Francesco Maurolico's poem *Gesta apostolorum et sanctorum* (1555) and Antonio Filoteo Omodei's *Vita della beata Chiara da Montefalco* (1556), as well as in dialect, such as Girolamo Puglisi's *Legenda del beato Corrado piacentino in rime vulgari siciliane* (1568).<sup>376</sup>

<sup>374</sup> On Filippi's *Vita di Santa Caterina* see also 3.1.

<sup>375</sup> As usual, I refer to Edit16.

<sup>376</sup> *Vita Christi Salvatoris eiusque matris sanctissime: senariis rhithmis correcta multisque additionibus necessariis illustrata. Gesta apostolorum et sanctorum nuper eodem rhythmorum genere composita* (Venice: Bindoni, 1555). The *Vita Christi Salvatoris eiusque matris sanctissime* is by Matteo Caldo. Both Caldo and Maurolico's poems are in vernacular despite their Latin title. Antonio Filoteo Omodei, *Vita della beata Chiara da Montefalco* (Palermo, 1556). Girolamo Puglisi, *Legenda del beato Corrado piacentino in rime vulgari siciliane*, [...] (Palermo: Mayda, 1568).

More importantly, in Filippi's hagiographic poem Ariosto's *Furioso* features as an important poetic model. Filippi's *Vita* is a faithful account of the life of St. Catherine of Alexandria in line with his sources, which he lists in the dedicatory letter to Fardella: Julianus Pomerius, Jacobus de Voragine, and the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita* among others.<sup>377</sup> Furthermore, prior to publication the poem was read and approved by the Sicilian Dominican historian Tommaso Fazello on behalf of the Sicilian Inquisitor and by the Master of the Dominican order Luigi da Catania. Considering Filippi's sources and adherence to orthodoxy, the influence of *Orlando furioso* in his poem is particularly striking. While Filippi's subject is religious and hagiographic, from the first stanzas of the *Santa Caterina* his main stylistic model nonetheless appears to be Ariosto's romance:

*La vita, i gesti santi, il puro cuore,  
l'empio martir, l'acerba morte io canto  
d'una real donzella, il cui valore  
sovr'ogn'altro che s'oda acquista il vanto,  
mentre il fiero Massenzio imperadore  
per trarla dal pensier pudico, e santo,  
la tormenta, l'affligge, e la percuote  
con ferri, funi, carcer, fame, e ruote.*

*Dirò le gratie in lei dal Cielo infuse  
[...]*

*se 'l mio Signor eterno, che si chiuse  
fra noi, per darci vita (essendo spenti)  
m'accenderà col suo bel raggio il petto  
tanto ch'io possa dir quel che prometto.*

*E perch'io possa, padre, affaticarmi,  
nel tuo servizio (ben che mai no 'l sei)  
piacciati ancor di questo luogo trarmi  
e meco insieme ambo i Fardelli miei.*

VSC, I 1-3

*Le donne, i cavalier, l'arme gli amori  
le cortesie, le audaci imprese io canto  
che furo al tempo che passaro i Mori  
d'Africa il mar, e in Francia nocquer  
tanto seguendo l'ire e giovenil furori  
d'Agramante lor re che si diè vanto  
di vendicar la morte di Troiano  
sopra re Carlo imperator romano.*

*Dirò d'Orlando in un medesimo tratto  
cosa non detta in prosa mai, nè in rima:  
che per amor venne in furore e matto,  
d'uom che sì saggio era stimato prima;  
se da colei che tal quasi m'ha fatto  
che'l poco ingegno ad or ad or mi lima,  
me ne sarà però tanto concesso,  
Che mi basti a finir quant'ho promesso.*

*Piacciavi generosa erculea prole  
ornamento e splendor del secol nostro,  
Ippolito, aggradir questo che vuole  
e darvi sol può l'umil servo vostro.*

Of I, 1-2

The first three stanzas are clearly modelled on the proem of the *Furioso*: the structure of the first two verses mirrors the opening of the *Furioso* and in the first stanza the rhyme *canto-vanto* is reprised, albeit in different lines. The first and final verses of the second stanza evoke the corresponding ones by Ariosto and the dedication is similarly introduced by 'piacciati' at the beginning of the verse. In so doing, Filippi both appropriates and

<sup>377</sup> Julianus Pomerius was the late-fifteenth century author of a treatise entitled *De Vita Contemplativa*; Jacobus de Voragine wrote the popular collection of hagiographies *Legenda Aurea*, and the *Historia Ecclesiastica Tripartita* is a Church history compiled by Cassiodorus.

reinstates Ariosto's text. On the one hand, he transposes the *Furioso* into the genre of hagiography, adapting it to its religious discourse; on the other, he ennoble the genre by means of the already well-known and potentially prestigious sound of Ariosto's words. This results in the simultaneous process of spiritualising *Orlando furioso* and rendering epic the *Santa Caterina*.

The presence of the *Furioso* as model seems to be confined to the beginning of the poem, since after the third stanza Filippi completely diverges from Ariosto and continues by addressing invocations to God and the Virgin Mary. Yet, in order to discuss religious themes and implications, Filippi expands the textual space for the author's reflections and comments at the beginning of each canto, a device used by Ariosto, and an important part in Ariosto's success, which Filippi adapts to the devotional purpose of his poem. Thus, for instance, canto II begins with the author's reflections on sacred and profane love, the spiritual and carnal dimensions (VSC II, 1-5). Furthermore, an element he appropriates from the romance tradition is the active presence of the narrator, a prominent feature of Ariosto's narrative in particular, through formulas such as 'ove poi fece quanto | io vi farò sentir ne l'altro canto'<sup>378</sup> in canto I, or 'Come ne andasser poi tutti a morire | voglio ne l'altro canto differire' in canto IX. It is noteworthy that the latter expression clearly echoes *Of* IV, 72, 7-8 ('incominciò con umil voce a dire | quel ch'io vo ne l'altro canto differire'). However, authorial interventions of this kind take place at the ending of each canto and do not disrupt the linear narrative, as in the following canto the narration is resumed from the same point. Thus, Filippi appropriates only the model of Ariosto's end-of-canto interruptions, which Javitch has demonstrated aim at captivating readers without depriving them of continuity.<sup>379</sup>

In terms of content, Filippi seems to oppose the romance tradition, which was associated with paganism and heresy. A few references to that kind of production in fact imply the opposition between Filippi's religious subject matter and the chivalric subject of romances. In canto III the world is described as blind and morally errant ('o cieco mondo, o mondo troppo errante' VSC III, 2) and the pagan Emperor Maxentius is described as 'idolatra, pien d'errori, e matto',<sup>380</sup> where the position of the word 'matto' at the end of the verse and the alliteration of the *r* might evoke Ariosto's 'che per amore venne in furore e matto' (*Of* I, 2, 3). More importantly, the negative moral connotation attached to the romance dimension of errancy is evident from a passage in canto IV, where

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<sup>378</sup> Quotations of Filippi's poem are indicated by VSC followed by the number of canto and stanza(s), *Vita di Santa Caterina* 13<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>379</sup> Daniel Javitch, 'Cantus Interruptus in the *Orlando Furioso*.' *MLN*, 95 (1980), 66-80 (pp. 69-70).

<sup>380</sup> VSC III 21.

the conversion of the queen to Christianity is described as a liberation from the ‘primo intrico’ (VSC VI, 19) while the people continue to delude themselves with romances and are therefore blind to the true religion:

Ma la sciocca terrena ignobil turba,  
che mai non mira più di quel c’ha innanzi,  
[...]  
anzi con falso, e vil giuditio turba,  
e con fole di sogni, e di romanzi,  
se stessa ogn’hor, né sa quel’ ch’ella sia,  
e pur cieca, e terrena al ciel s’invia.

VSC VI, 8

Significantly, Filippi alludes to Petrarch’s condemnation of romances in *Triumphus Cupidinis* (‘fole di sogni, e di romanzi’ *Tc* IV 65-66), which results in the association of the romance dimension with the pagan. The significance of Petrarch’s judgement will be further discussed in relation to academic environments in chapter 12. In this passage of the *Santa Caterina*, the errancy that characterises romances and particularly the *Furioso*, as demonstrated by Patricia Parker, is negatively charged as the implications of religious orthodoxy require the identification of moral errancy, an element already present in Ariosto, with heresy.<sup>381</sup> As a consequence, romances, and therefore *Orlando furioso*, are incorporated in Filippi’s religious discourse as an Other to be antagonised and rejected: in this sense, Filippi can be considered a precursor of the demonisation of romances which Sergio Zatti has highlighted in the *Liberata*, where the romance code is associated with Satan, as seen in the Introduction.

Despite the condemnation of the romance tradition, however, some images evoke the *Furioso* and some the *Lettere sopra il Furioso*. In canto III Catherine’s wet nurse in her lament compares the saint, who is being taken to the presence of the Emperor, to an innocent lamb surrounded by rapacious wolves (‘dov’hor ne vai mia semplicetta agnella | in mezzo, a questi lupi empi e rapaci?’ VSC III, 68), evoking Orlando’s comparison of Angelica to an innocent lamb threatened by wolves in his lament in canto VIII (‘deh, dove senza me, dolce mia vita [...] riman tra boschi la smarrita agnella [...] o pur t’han trovata i lupi rei?’ *Of* VIII, 76, 1,4; 77, 3).<sup>382</sup> Conversely, the description of Catherine’s court in the same canto echoes in reverse that of Alcina: the saint renounces ‘balli, e suoni, | egloghe, vaghi giochi, e scenici atti; | [...] Ganimedi, et histrioni, | con visi sempre stolti,

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<sup>381</sup> Patricia A. Parker, *Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode*, 2nd edn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 4-53.

<sup>382</sup> On Orlando’s lament see also 5.9.

More importantly, in the first canto the description of Catherine's beauty, reported in a letter to Maxentius from the Roman ambassador, is modelled on that of Alcina, which also provided a model in the *Lettere*, and particularly in Rinaldo's epistle.<sup>383</sup> Filippi expands and amplifies the original source in both the descriptions of Angelica and Catherine, which share some verses and even entire stanzas. The description of Catherine's beauty occupies 12 stanzas (VSC I, 60-71) compared with the 6 stanzas Ariosto dedicates to Alcina (*Of* VII, 11-16). The order of the elements described follows Ariosto's quite closely: hair, brow, eyebrows, nose, mouth, neck, chest, hands. Unlike Ariosto, however, Filippi describes Catherine's eyes for the length of two stanzas, at the end of the ambassador's letter.

Un bel sentier *la luminosa seta*  
 parte, calando al mezo in su la fonte,  
 ove su'l *bianco avorio* siede lieta  
 una lampade accesa in gratie pronte,  
 e *lascia giusta la sua dolce meta*  
*fra* le due tempie, che le fanno ponte.  
 In questo Apollo, mi cred'io,  
 si specchia,  
 quando a darci un bel giorno  
 s'apparecchia

RA 7

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Other stanzas seem to have been reworked to various extents in the *Lettere*, as they may coincide only partially or in few verses. In stanza 66, partly rewritten in RA12, Catherine's teeth are 'due sfilze di minute perle' (VSC I, 66), like Alcina's are 'due sfilze [...] di perle elette' (*Of* VII, 13):

*Che debbo dir? Che mi consigli Amore  
de le due sfilze di minute perle,  
che paion veramente nel colore  
più ch'alabastro candide a vederle;  
e questo anco nel collo estinto muore  
che non s'udì che mai s'indore o  
imperle;  
e convien che sia tal, poi che sostiene  
quanto noi potea dare il Ciel di bene.*

VSC I 66

*Che debbo dir, che mi consigli Amore  
de le candide perle orientali,  
ch'a le filze son perle, e di colore  
al latte ed a la neve sono eguali?  
Quinci la dolce bocca manda fuore  
con sì soave suono accenti tali,  
che vincon l'armonia, con cui si gira  
l'opera immensa ch'ogni spirto ammira.*

RA 12

Similarly, in stanza 70, reworked in RA 17, the description of Catherine's eyes ('d'un vivo nero e chiaro più che il sole' VSC I 70) echoes Alcina's ('due negri occhi, anzi duo chiari soli' *Of* VII 12, 2).

Moreover, two other verses of the *Santa Caterina* are also in Rinaldo's epistle. In canto X Maxentius, who wishes to marry Catherine, attempts to woo her through flattery and reasons that her exceptional beauty does not suit her rejection of love. A similar concept is expressed by Rinaldo, and both Rinaldo and Maxentius state that 'star non ponno insieme, e sempre in lite | la castitade, e la bellezza unite'.<sup>385</sup> The integration of Filippi's text in the *Lettere* with verses and stanzas from the *Santa Caterina* might have taken place during its posthumous revision, perhaps in the aftermath of the hagiographic poem's success. The reworking of Catherine's description in the *Lettere*, moreover, might have been suggested by the fact that in the *Santa Caterina* it is expressed in epistolary form, as it is the Roman ambassador who is describing the saint in a letter to the emperor. At all events, in the two works the continuous significant presence of Ariosto and their connection through it are established, despite apparently opposing contexts.

More importantly, in the description of the saint, Ariosto's text is adapted to fit Filippi's religious narrative. While describing Alcina, Ariosto comments that her angelic figure cannot be disguised (*Of* VII, 15). In the *Santa Caterina*, Catherine's heavenly

<sup>385</sup> RA 32, *Lettere sopra il Furioso*; VSC X, 40. In RA the spelling is 'castitate'.

figure, the ambassador writes, is in stark contrast with her apparel (VSC I 68), which cannot conceal her beauty: Filippi reworks the *topos* of the cloaked celestial nature already employed by Ariosto. However, while Ariosto's comment turns out to be deceptive since Alcina's appearance is a magical illusion, Catherine's heavenly beauty reflects her true nature. Just as the sight of Alcina ensnares Ruggiero, so the description of Catherine's beauty captures the interest of Maxentius, who abandons the care of his empire in order to chase her. Thus, Filippi appropriates Ariosto's text and the dynamics of amorous conquest and adapts them to a narrative grounded on the rejection and condemnation of profane love, which was symbolised by Alcina according to Ariosto's allegorisers and is symbolised by Maxentius in the *Santa Caterina*.

Mazzamuto has rightly observed that Filippi's sacred poem is fundamentally characterised by the religious appropriation of the heroic dimension.<sup>386</sup> Yet, the *Orlando furioso* is not only grafted onto a new religious narrative but also exhibited and reinstated as a literary model to the point that Filippi's appropriation draws together Ariosto and religious discourse, making Ariosto religious and hagiography 'Ariostan'. The *Santa Caterina*, in fact, shares some features with religious rewritings of the *Furioso*, such as the condemnation of the romance tradition and the juxtaposition of madness and heresy (or rebellion to Catholic orthodoxy); the lyrical dimension of profane love, moreover, is condemned through the figure of the lustful pagan Emperor.

With regard to Filippi's processes of adaptation and appropriation, it is significant that he was connected to Sicilian academic environments. A member of the Accademia dei Solitari under the name of Funesto, as noted in 3.1, Filippi was influenced by Caggio's poetics; on the other hand, there is no evidence of contact between Filippi and Cumia, who was also connected to Caggio and whose *Rime* were published the same year as the *Santa Caterina*. Filippi was likely also associated with the Accademia degli Accesi, since his poem is preceded, in the *princeps* and subsequent editions, by a sonnet of Giambattista Macarello, a member of the Solitari as well as the Accesi under the name of Tardo, and one by Stefano d'Anna, another member of the Accesi.<sup>387</sup> Macarello notably features as one of the authors of sonnets in Terracina's *Seste rime*, where he is mentioned by his academic name.<sup>388</sup> Furthermore, as will be seen in chapter 12, the Prince of the Accesi Leonardo Orlandini mentions Filippi's poem and academic name in his letter to the reader introducing Matteo Donia's heroic poem *Giorgio* (1599), which points to the connection

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<sup>386</sup> Mazzamuto, pp. 300-301.

<sup>387</sup> Filippi, *Vita di Santa Caterina*, \*5<sup>r</sup>-\*5<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>388</sup> Terracina, *Seste Rime*, h5<sup>v</sup>-h6<sup>r</sup>.

of Filippi's poem with later academic environments. Significantly, Filippi's work is referenced in Orlandini's discussion on poetry and the merits of Ariosto's romance and Tasso's epic.

## **11. ORLANDO FURIOSO AND POETRY IN SICILIAN DIALECT: ANTONIO VENEZIANO (1543-1593)**

### **11.1 Antonio Veneziano and the Sicilian literary tradition**

So far this section has focussed on works in the Italian vernacular. Giuseppe Cumia's appropriation of the *Furioso* in particular takes place within the well-established vernacular tradition of Petrarchism. I will now move on to consider poetry in Sicilian, and particularly the Sicilian poems by Antonio Veneziano. Veneziano's dialect works, in fact, display a complex web of intertextual sources including Ariosto's romance. As I will argue, a closer analysis of Veneziano's references to the *Furioso* reveals that the influence of Ariosto's romance was mostly related to erotic themes as a result of its inclusion in the Sicilian Petrarchan tradition.

Mainly known as a dialect poet, Antonio Veneziano is a complex figure both due to his adventurous life and to his extensive literary production. A former Jesuit student, Veneziano left the Order for unknown reasons and faced a series of legal misadventures, until he was eventually captured by Algerian pirates after joining Carlo d'Aragona Tagliavia in his journey to Madrid. During his captivity in Algeria his fellow prisoner was Miguel de Cervantes, who particularly appreciated Veneziano's poems and later sent him some *octavas reales*. Ransomed by the Sicilian Senate, Veneziano returned to the island, where, after family disputes and legal controversies, he was arrested and incarcerated in the Castellammare prison (like Filippi earlier), where he died in 1593 because of a gunpowder explosion, together with fellow captive Argisto Giuffredì.<sup>389</sup> Such a complicated life and tragic death account for his presence in Sicilian folklore. In his essay eloquently entitled *Antonio Veneziano nella leggenda popolare siciliana*,

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<sup>389</sup> For Veneziano's biography I rely on Gaetano Millunzi whose essay appears in *Del sole, della luna, dello sguardo: vita di Antonio Veneziano. Antologia poetica* ed. by Aldo Gerbino (Palermo: Novecento 1994) and Antonio Veneziano, *Ottave*, ed. by Aurelio Rigoli (Turin: Einaudi, 1967). Rigoli's edition is introduced by Sciascia. Millunzi's essay was first published in his work on Veneziano: Gaetano Millunzi, *Il poeta Antonio Veneziano: studio sopra documenti inediti* (Palermo: Lo Statuto, 1894).

Giuseppe Pitrè reports various popular tales surrounding Veneziano's life and deeds, including the legend of his friendship with Torquato Tasso.<sup>390</sup>

Veneziano's production, which circulated in manuscript form in the sixteenth century, was extremely varied in terms of language as well as genre, and his biography and his *canzuni*, particularly the Petrarchan collection known as *Celia*, have attracted most of the critical attention, as shown by the anthologised editions of his poetry.<sup>391</sup> To date, the most philologically reliable edition of Veneziano's poetry in dialect is the *Libro delle rime siciliane*, edited by Gaetana Maria Rinaldi. This includes the complete edition of the *Libru primu di li canzuni amurusi siciliani*, that is to say the *Celia*, as well as other compositions, such as three *capitoli burleschi* (*Puttanismu*, *Cornaria* and *Arangeida*), and Cervantes' *octavas reales* in praise of the Sicilian poet. Rinaldi's edition is based on an autograph manuscript that dates back to the 1580s.<sup>392</sup> Before discussing Veneziano's appropriation of *Orlando furioso* in some of his lyrical and burlesque poems (namely, *Celia*, *Puttanismu* and *Cornaria*) an overview of the tradition of dialect poetry in Sicily and of its development in the Cinquecento is necessary in order to contextualise Veneziano's linguistic choices and literary models as well as the significance of his poetry.

The Sicilian language occupies an important place in the development of the Tuscan vernacular that was codified by Bembo in the sixteenth century. The Sicilian School, in fact, is credited with the invention of the sonnet form which was later adopted by Dante. More importantly, in his *De vulgari eloquentia* (I 12) Dante states that the Sicilian language is the most prestigious vernacular, albeit only in its literary form. As pointed out by Karla Mallette, Sicilian is thus regarded as an early version of Italian and the Sicilians as dialect poets 'writing in a tongue defined by its difference from a norm that would emerge only subsequently'.<sup>393</sup> Significantly, Dante's treatise is mentioned by Claudio Mario Arezzo in his *Osservantii dila lingua siciliana, et canzoni inlo proprio idioma*, published by Spira in Messina in 1543.<sup>394</sup> The *Osservantii* is a linguistic treatise

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<sup>390</sup> Giuseppe Pitrè, 'Antonio Veneziano nella leggenda popolare siciliana', *Archivio storico siciliano*, 19 (1894), 3-17 (pp. 4-5). Pitrè's essay is also included in the anthology edited by Aldo Gerbino (*Del sole, della luna, dello sguardo...* (Palermo: Novecento, 1994).

<sup>391</sup> Beside the aforementioned anthologies, another recent collection is Antonio Veneziano, *Ottave*, ed. by Gaetana Maria Rinaldi, Pietro Mazzamuto and Leonardo Sciascia (Monreale: Comune, 1990).

<sup>392</sup> Antonio Veneziano, *Libro delle rime siciliane*, ed. by Gaetana Maria Rinaldi (Palermo: Centro di studi filologici e linguistici siciliani, 2012). The manuscript (XI.B.6) is held in the Sicilian regional library Alberto Bombace in Palermo.

<sup>393</sup> Karla Mallette, *The Kingdom of Sicily 1100-1250: a Literary History* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), p.117. On the Sicilian School and on Dante's literary theory see pp. 71-89, 116-117.

<sup>394</sup> The dates of birth and death of Arezzo are uncertain; for his biography and works I refer to Roberto Zapperi, 'Arezzo, Claudio Mario', in *DBI*, IV (1962), pp. 106-108. Claudio Mario Arezzo, *Osservantii dila*

promoting the literary use of Sicilian dialect, championed by Arezzo in opposition to the Tuscan vernacular. Arezzo's work, which includes a series of grammatical observations with regard to the literary use of the dialect, is introduced by a preface outlining the author's viewpoint in opposition to Bembo's: Arezzo claims that the origin of the literary language of Dante and Petrarch is, in fact, Sicilian. Referencing Dante's treatise translated by Trissino,<sup>395</sup> Arezzo rejects the primacy of Provençal poetry espoused by Bembo and accuses him of aiming to 'mandar fora Sicilia da Italia',<sup>396</sup> that is, isolate Sicily from the Italian literary tradition. Citing Dante and Petrarch as authorities and referring to the Sicilian School, Arezzo writes 'chi non solo Sicilia è di Italia, ma che [sic] in quillo tempo parlava meglio chi tutta Italia'.<sup>397</sup> Arezzo thus claims the primacy of the Sicilian tradition and considers the language of Dante and Petrarch to represent its corruption. As in Dante, however, the Sicilian championed by Arezzo is a literary language distinguished from the Sicilian commonly spoken by the people. Arezzo's linguistic and grammatical observations are followed by a group of Sicilian *canzuni*, traditional Sicilian octaves characterised by the rhyme scheme A-B-A-B-A-B-A-B, so that he provides an example of the Sicilian literary language proposed as model.

Arezzo's position in the Cinquecento debates on literary language was an isolated one, and in his time he was particularly known for his historiographical works, including the *De situ insulae siciliae*, one of the main historiographical accounts of Sicily written by a Sicilian in the Cinquecento together with Tommaso Fazello's *De rebus Siculis decades duae*.<sup>398</sup> Given that in Sicilian cultural environments the Tuscan vernacular was accepted as the canonical literary language, Arezzo's position remained the expression of a minority and was generally ignored in the academic environments of his time. More importantly, however, as noted by Lo Piparo<sup>399</sup> the prestige of Arezzo's literary Sicilian actually rests on the prestige of the Tuscan vernacular, and, as observed by Alfieri,

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*lingua siciliana, et canzoni inlo proprio idioma, di Mario di Arezzo, gentil'homo saragusano* (Messina: Spira, 1543).

<sup>395</sup> Trissino, who discovered Dante's treatise and introduced it in the discussions on the *questione della lingua*, published a vernacular translation in 1529 (*Dante. De la volgare eloquenzia. Giovanni di Boccaccio da Certaldo, ne la vita di Dante. [...] (Venezia: Gianicolo, 1529)*). On the impact of the *De vulgari eloquentia* see Massimo Lucarelli, 'Il *De vulgari eloquentia* nel Cinquecento italiano e francese', *Studi Francesi*, 49.2 (2015), 247-259.

<sup>396</sup> I cite from *Osservantii dila lingua siciliana et canzoni inlo proprio idioma*, ed. by Sebastiano Grasso (Caltanissetta: Lussografica, 2008), p. 25.

<sup>397</sup> Arezzo, *Osservantii*, p. 26.

<sup>398</sup> Arezzo's production was quite varied; for his life and works I refer to Zapperi, in *DBI*, IV (1962), pp. 106-108. Arezzo's *De situ insulae siciliae* was published three times in Sicily (in 1537 and 1542 in Messina by Spira and in 1537 in Palermo by Mayda). Fazello's *De rebus siculis decades duae* was published in Palermo three times (by Mayda and Carrara in 1558 and 1560, and by Mayda in 1568) and translated into vernacular by Remigio Nannini (*Le due deche dell'historia di Sicilia [...] Tradotte dal latino in lingua toscana dal p.m. Remigio Fiorentino. [...] Con tre tavole [...] (Venice: Guerra, 1573)*).

<sup>399</sup> Lo Piparo, pp. 735-807.

Arezzo's operation can be regarded both as a '*bembizzazione del siciliano*' and a '*petrarchizzazione del siciliano*':<sup>400</sup> the Sicilian dialect undergoes a process of codification not dissimilar from the one proposed by Bembo for the Tuscan vernacular and referring to Petrarch as the main model.

While Arezzo's literary proposal did not exert a direct influence over Sicilian literary culture, the practice of dialect poetry continued throughout the Cinquecento, as exemplified by the *canzuni* by Rizzari which Martoretta set to music mentioned in 7.2. Discussing Sicilian Petrarchism between the Cinquecento and the Seicento, Tobia Zanon has acutely observed that it was rather Caggio's project of literary innovation that significantly influenced Sicilian dialect poetry by providing a theoretical base underpinning its poetic development. The tendency of Sicilian poetry to appropriate Petrarchism is characteristic of the poems by Bartolomeo d'Asmundo and Giovan Nicola Rizzari.<sup>401</sup> Sicilian Petrarchism, which flourished between the Cinquecento and the Seicento in manuscript form, culminated in the publication of Giuseppe Galeano's *Le Muse siciliane ovvero scelta di tutte le canzoni della Sicilia* (1645-1653), a four-volume collection of Sicilian poetry which officially established the canon in dialect.<sup>402</sup> The pivotal role of Veneziano in the establishment of Sicilian Petrarchism is evident from its pre-eminence in Galeano's collection, which includes also poems by Asmundo. The importance of Veneziano is such that he marks the passage from one phase of Sicilian dialect poetry to another, as observed by Zanon.<sup>403</sup>

Veneziano's choice to use dialect was based on the awareness of the Sicilian tradition, as Veneziano himself clarifies. His Sicilian poems, which were written during and after his time in Algeria, are preceded by a letter to an unidentified dedicatee<sup>404</sup> in which he explains his choice of Sicilian dialect over the Tuscan vernacular. Though the letter refers to the *libru primu*, Veneziano's observations on the preference accorded to Sicilian

<sup>400</sup> Gabriella Alfieri, 'L'etichetta linguistica dei toscanisti siciliani tra osservanza ed osservazione', in *Tra Rinascimento e strutture attuali, Atti del I Congresso Internazionale S.I.L.F.I. (Siena, 28-30 Marzo 1989)*, ed. by Luciano Giannelli and others, 2 vols (Turin: Rosenberg e Sellier, 1991), I, pp. 103-17 (p.103). With regard to Bembo's model in Sicily, Alfieri notes that it took the form of a 'italianismo fondato su fiorentinismo bembiano con influsso trissiniano' (Alfieri, 'La Sicilia', in *L'italiano nelle regioni*, ed. by Francesco Bruni, I, pp. 798-860 (p. 819).

<sup>401</sup> Tobia Zanon, 'Il ms. 603 della Biblioteca del Musée Condé (Chantilly). Storia del manoscritto, edizione critica e analisi metrico-stilistica' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Verona, 2008) <[http://www.univr.it/documenti/AllegatiOA/allegatooa\\_03354.pdf](http://www.univr.it/documenti/AllegatiOA/allegatooa_03354.pdf)>, p. 34. Zanon's doctoral thesis provides an insightful overview of Sicilian Petrarchism between the Cinquecento and the Seicento. On the origin and development of the *canzuna* see in particular pp. 75-79; on the poetry of Asmundo and Rizzari pp. 34, 36 and on their biographies pp. 50, 52. [accessed 25 May 2017].

<sup>402</sup> Giuseppe Galeano published his anthology under the pseudonym of Pier Giuseppe Sanclemente: *Le Muse siciliane ouero Scelta di tutte le canzoni della Sicilia, [...]* (Palermo: Bua and Portanova, 1645-1653).

<sup>403</sup> Zanon, p. 37.

<sup>404</sup> With regard to the period of composition of the poems and to the possible identification of the dedicatee with the Viceroy Marcantonio Colonna see Veneziano, *Libro delle Rime*, pp. X-XII.

dialect are quite general and therefore relevant with regard to all his production in dialect. His choice, Veneziano claims, is original, natural and pragmatic:

Forsi lu mundo aspittiria autri primizii di l'ingegnu miu. *Ma in quali lingua potia megghiu fari principiu chi in chilla chi primu non sulamenti imparai, ma sucai cu lu latti?* Et in quali sorti di componimenti chi in chilla in la quali io sarrò lu primu? Non già v'iu sia lu primu poeta, ma perchè iu su lu primu chi nexu a stu ringu di mandari in luci canzuni siciliani. [...]

*Starria friscu Homeru chi fu grecu e scrissi grecu, Horaziu chi fu d'undi si parlava latinu e scrissi latinu, lu Petrarca chi fu tuscanu e scrissi tuscanu, s'a mia, chi su sicilianu, non mi convenissi componiri sicilianu.* E si Plautu happi a summa grazia potiri imitari chillu primu comicu sicilianu Epicarmu e Virgiliu si tinni assai contenti di ritrairi l'Idillii di Teocritu, puru sicilianu, iu chi su sicilianu m'haiu a fari pappagallu di li lingui d'autro? O, la lingua Toscana è chiù comuni et è chiù intisa: è veru in Italia, ma no in Sicilia, nè appresso li donni siciliani, a cui la mayor parti de li poeti cerca placiri e fare servituti. [...] La poesia non sta ne lu idioma, sta ne la vena, ne lo spiritu e ne li pinseri. Benchì iu, per grazia di Diu, sacia autramenti scriviri, per hora m'è placiuto mustrarimi ne lu miu propriu visaggiu; quando vurrò farimi mascara, mustrirò chi cussì beni fazzu la mia parti comu ogni autro poria fari. [...] *Ma risolvasi ognunu chi un grande affettu non si basta megghiu esplicari chi in maternu* [...].<sup>405</sup>

Though he is not the first poet to compose in dialect, Veneziano claims to be the first one planning to have his Sicilian poems printed. His linguistic choice is based on his pride in writing in his mother tongue, which for him is a natural choice. The argument of the naturalness of the vernacular is a traditional one dating back to Dante: in *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (I, 1) Dante defines the vernacular as the language the children learn by imitating the wet nurse, grounding its primacy in its natural origin. Thus, as the highlighted text shows, Veneziano recalls Dante's arguments with the aim of supporting the primacy of Sicilian over the artificial Italian vernacular and cites Homer, Horace and Petrarch as illustrious examples of authors who wrote in their mother tongue. Furthermore, Veneziano justifies his choice by citing the Roman authors Plautus and Virgil as the imitators of the Sicilian Greeks Epicharmus and Theocritus: through the mention of classical authors of Sicilian origin imitated by Roman classical poets, Veneziano implicitly hints at the Sicilian origin of the literary models of the classical tradition, thus reaffirming the prestige of the Sicilian literary tradition.

To describe the act of imitation, moreover, Veneziano employs the metaphor of the parrot, whose act of imitation is regarded as negative. This metaphor was already employed with a negative connotation by Angelo Poliziano in his epistolary exchange with Paolo Cortese discussing imitation and is one of a series of zoological metaphors referring to literary imitation, including the classical image of the ape; the metaphor of

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<sup>405</sup> Veneziano, *Libro delle Rime*, pp. 3-4. The letter is dated 13th December 1581.

the ape also features in Petrarch (*Fam.* XXIII 19) and Boccaccio (*Gen.* XIV 17).<sup>406</sup> As both the ape and the parrot are symbols of superficial and uncreative imitation, Veneziano is professing a creative approach which allows self-expression due to the naturalness of Sicilian.

Moreover, from a more pragmatic perspective, Veneziano points out that in Sicily the Tuscan vernacular is not understood or spoken as much as the dialect of the island and that consequently the use of the Tuscan vernacular should be confined to other, more official circumstances. More importantly, according to him, poetic practice is independent from the language used as it is the result of poetic inspiration. Veneziano thus upholds the primacy of *res* over *verba*, of poetic imagination over language ('La poesia non sta ne lu idioma, sta ne la vena, ne lo spiritu e ne li pinseri'). His choice of writing in Sicilian is, then, an expressive, stylistic and pragmatic choice grounded in the prestige of the Sicilian literary tradition, but does not amount to an attack on the Tuscan vernacular, as the mention of Petrarch on a par with Homer and Horace indicates. Rather, Veneziano is reclaiming a literary space for dialects in general and Sicilian in particular. Thus, his linguistic stance aligns in principle with the cultural tendency promoting the literary use of Sicilian, which was championed by Arezzo. However, while Arezzo's position was developed in polemic to Bembo within the context of the linguistic discussions of the first decades of the Cinquecento, the use of the literary Sicilian dialect by Veneziano and his Seicento epigones matured after the Petrarchan model had been thoroughly accepted and integrated into Sicilian literary culture, and was therefore distinguished by a dynamic relation of imitation and opposition with the Tuscan vernacular. Nonetheless, both Arezzo and Veneziano's literary stances, significantly influenced by, if not based on, Dante, are evidence of a cultural trend seeking to ennoble Sicilian dialect and raise it to the literary status enjoyed by the Tuscan vernacular. As a consequence of this process, Veneziano eclectically appropriates classical, Sicilian and Tuscan models, including Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> On Poliziano and Cortese's dispute on imitatio see Mc Laughlin, pp. 187-227 (in particular 203-204). On the image of the ape in Petrarch and Boccaccio see pp. 30, 58-59. It is noteworthy that Boccaccio's *Genealogie deorum gentilium* was printed several times in the Cinquecento, especially in its vernacular translation by Giuseppe Betussi (sixteen editions).

<sup>407</sup> As seen in the Introduction, Ariosto's poem, polished by the author according to Bembo's recommendations, was also a linguistic model.



## 11.2 *Orlando furioso* and Antonio Veneziano's collection of lyric poems *Celia*

Ariosto's romance significantly features as poetic source in Veneziano's most well-known work, *Celia*, a collection of *canzuni* which takes its title from the name of the poet's beloved. While Petrarch remains the main poetic model, Veneziano's poetry is particularly characterised by an artificial and sophisticated reworking of modern and classical images and tropes grafted onto Petrarchan lyrical discourse. In Veneziano the Petrarchan code is shattered and reconstructed through a fabric of intertextual concurrences, including Sicilian popular ones, and the lyrical discourse is structured around figurative comparisons.<sup>408</sup> Though *Orlando furioso* is not among the main sources, its presence is noticeable in a few instances. In two octaves Veneziano displays precise references to Ariosto's text:<sup>409</sup>

L'acqua, chi st'afflitt'occhi tutti l'huri  
culanu supra sta facci e stu pettu,  
non su lagrimi no, chi tant'humuri  
non c'è in un arsu comu mia in effettu.  
È un'acqua chi nexu iu di milli xhiuri  
di quantu viju in vui bellu e perfettu:  
campana è lu mio cori, focu Amuri,  
lambicu l'occhi pr'undi l'acqua yettu.

Chisti, ch'a tutti parinu sospiri  
Perchè su ventu chi lu pettu exala,  
Su di lu cori miu occulti martiri  
D'intensissima pena chi mai scala;  
È un focu chi si senti e non pò diri  
Chi xhiuxha Amuri cu l'una e l'autr'ala,  
Et hora pari intrari et hora xiri,  
Mentri l'un'ala spingi e l'autra cala.

*Lp* XLIX, CCXLI

- queste non son più lacrime, che fuore  
stillo dagli occhi con così larga vena.  
Non suppliron le lacrime al dolore:  
finir, ch'a mezzo era il dolore a pena.  
Dal fuoco spinto ora il vitale umore  
fugge per quella via ch'agli occhi mena;  
et è quel che si versa, e trarrà insieme  
e 'l dolore e la vita all'ore estreme.

Questi ch'indizio fan del mio tormento,  
sospir non sono, né i sospir son tali.  
Quelli han triegua talora; io mai non sento  
che 'l petto mio men la sua pena esali.  
Amor che m'marde il cor, fa questo vento,  
mentre dibatte intorno al fuoco l'ali.  
Amor con che miracolo lo fai,  
che 'n fuoco il tenghi, e nol consumi mai?

*Of* XXIII, 126-7

Ariosto's relevance to Veneziano has already been pointed out by Sebastiano Vento, who observes that the metaphors of the lover's sighs as heart's fire and of the lover's tears as a different fluid, and the image of Love blowing with its wings, albeit stereotypes of the lyrical tradition, are particularly present in the lament of Orlando after the discovery of

<sup>408</sup> Mazzamuto, p. 322-323. To date the only monographical study of Veneziano's poetry is Sebastiano Vento's contribution (see note 319 above), which focusses on *Celia* and predates the philological edition of Rinaldi. More recent contributions, beside Mazzamuto's, are Antonio Veneziano: *atti del convegno*, ed. by Salvatore Di Marco (Palermo: Provincia regionale, 2000) and Carmelo Spalanca, *Dal petrarchismo al manierismo: Antonio Veneziano e i 'Discorsi sopra le statue del fonte pretorio'* (Florence: Olschki, 1988).

<sup>409</sup> *Lp* refers to *Libru primu* in Rinaldi's edition. Vento refers to a version of *Lp* 49 with slightly different verses at line 1 and 2 (p. 44).

Angelica and Medoro's love in canto XXIII.<sup>410</sup> The tears of Orlando, who is losing his mind because of his unrequited love, are compared to his blood, a metaphor of the incessant passion leading him to his death.

Orlando's lament, which marks the beginning of the paladin's madness, is based on a Latin epigram by the fifteenth-century humanist Michele Marullo Tarcaniota, as Ariosto evokes Marullo's images as well as some of his lines. Thus, Veneziano takes his cue from both Marullo and Ariosto, but his artful reworking of the *topos* of the poet's tears is characterised by refined artificiosity, underlined by the image of the alembic (the eyes as limbeck, the heart as its cover and love as the fire).<sup>411</sup> By creatively associating Ariosto and his source, Veneziano displays an in-depth knowledge of the *Furioso* and of Ariosto's poetics. Moreover, through an inextricable net of overlapping images and textual references Veneziano appropriates both Ariosto and Marullo: by adapting, again linguistically, a textual passage already characterised in a lyrical sense in the *Furioso* and contaminating it with his source Veneziano isolates and at the same time enhances the lyrical potential of Ariosto. Simultaneously, moreover, through such contamination the *Furioso* is disguised as a subtext of Veneziano's lyrical discourse.

### 11.3 *Orlando furioso* and Antonio Veneziano's burlesque poems *Puttanismo* and *Cornaria*

*Orlando furioso* is not only a poetic source or subtext in Veneziano's *canzoniere*. The Sicilian poet, in fact, makes explicit references to Ariosto's characters in his burlesque poems, a production very different from lyric poetry. A highly versatile author, Veneziano adopted new literary forms and vernacular genres, such as the *capitoli berneschi*, in his dialect production. His *capitoli in terza rima Arangeida*, *Cornaria* and *Puttanismu*, which circulated in manuscript in the sixteenth century and are now included in Rinaldi's edition,<sup>412</sup> follow in the footsteps of Francesco Berni's burlesque poems and are thus characterised by a satirical topic such as the paradoxical praise of objects and situations. As suggested by the titles, *Arangeida* is a satirical encomium of the orange fruit, which probably has a covert sexual meaning,<sup>413</sup> *Cornaria* treats the subject of sexual

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<sup>410</sup> Vento, pp. 44-45.

<sup>411</sup> Vento, pp. 30, 46-47. On Ariosto's debt to Marullo see also Bigi's footnotes to the *Furioso* (pp. 788-789).

<sup>412</sup> The three *capitoli* are included in the same autograph manuscript as the *Libro primu* mentioned in 11.1 (see note 392).

<sup>413</sup> The orange does not appear in Jean Toscan's list of erotic hidden meanings in the poems of the Berneschi. However, considering the frequent sexual allusions attached to fruits in said genre it is very likely that Veneziano's *capitolo* also has an obscene meaning. Jean Toscan, *Le carnaval du langage: le*

betrayals and *Puttanismu* of sexual promiscuity. To date, only Pitrè has pointed out the reference to Ariosto's characters in Veneziano's *capitoli*, and specifically in *Puttanismu* and *Cornaria*, as evidence of the popular dissemination of the chivalric tradition in Sicily. However, beside a brief mention he does not discuss further the presence of the *Furioso* in Veneziano.<sup>414</sup> As I will demonstrate, the references to Ariosto and the diverse ways in which Veneziano deploys them showcase the dissemination of the *Furioso* across genres and its multifarious reception.

In *Puttanismu*, the poet addresses his beloved in order to convince her to give in to his love and, after the conventional praise of her virtue, which clearly satirises the lyrical convention, he points out that every woman has sometimes fooled her husband and that the landscape of Sicily, its beauty and heat, inspire 'l'amurusu iocu'<sup>415</sup> in every woman. He then calls for a *carpe diem* and lists a series of mythological and literary figures as examples, including a number of characters from *Orlando furioso*:

Vinju a lu tempo di l'heroi erranti  
nobili donni et invitti guerrieri,  
lassati l'armi, divintare amanti:  
lu forti Bradamanti di Ruggieri,  
di lu so Riggardettu Fiordespina,  
Fiordiligi happe lu so cavaleri.  
La bella donna di Catai reina,  
Angelica, non fu preda d'un moru?  
Di quanti fu Ginevra? Quanti Alcina?  
E chilla c'ha avanzatu a tutti loru  
in fidi et ha lu nomu almu e divinu,  
lo duci nomu per cui spinnu e moru,  
Isabella, non persi per Zerbinu  
e patria e patri e a l'ultima la vita  
per non venire a lu so amanti minu?  
Vota, patruna mia, la menti ardita,  
e mira, si mirari non t'offendi  
quanta gran turba ad amari t'invita!

*Puttanismo* 79-96

Veneziano's list of characters is striking in many respects. First of all, *Orlando furioso* is considered for its amorous matter: Ariosto's heroes are not mentioned as examples because of their heroic deeds but for their final choice of love over war. To the primacy of love is connected the presence of a number of female characters which exceeds that of men (7 heroines and 3 heroes). Some of these characters, moreover, are mentioned as

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*lexique érotique des poètes de l'équivoque, de Burchiello à Marino (XVe-XVIIe siècles)*, 4 vols (Lille: Atelier Reproduction des thèses, Université de Lille III, 1981).

<sup>414</sup> Pitrè, 'Le tradizioni cavalleresche', pp. 364-365.

<sup>415</sup> Veneziano, *Puttanismu* 48.

examples for the dedicatee to follow in an unexpected way, since, through the Horatian *carpe diem*, Veneziano revises and sometimes reverses the moral interpretation traditionally attached to Ariosto's characters. Thus, controversial characters for commentators of the *Furioso* like Fiordispina and Angelica provide here positive *exempla*, and even the evil sorceress Alcina is put in a positive light because of her amorous enterprises. In the case of Ginevra, who Veneziano mentions as promiscuous, the Sicilian poet is either referring to Guinevere, thus superimposing the Arthurian queen over the Scottish one of Ariosto, or he simply made a mistake.<sup>416</sup> On the other hand, Isabella, who bears the name of the poet's beloved and dedicatee of the poem, is praised by Veneziano as she is by Ariosto (*Of* XXIX, 26-27), so that in Veneziano's list she becomes another exemplary symbol of love, the driving force of her actions. Moreover, as the mention of Isabella is the culmination of a series of references aiming at convincing the dedicatee to give in to the poet's love, Isabella's story is also significant because it rests on the identification of the two namesakes, so that the dedicatee is at the same time paradoxically both praised for her virtue and reprimanded for her resistance to the poet's love.

The citation of Ariosto's heroines marks the beginning of a series of examples which includes figures such as Myrrha, Semiramis and Cleopatra, traditionally charged with negative connotations. Their mention as examples of the invincible power of love unmasks the paradoxical nature of Veneziano's poem, as he satirically reverses the conventional values attached to these mythological and literary characters. Adapted to the genre of the paradoxical encomium, the *Furioso* is thus cited as an authority at the same time as its characters are transformed and subverted.

Significantly, in *Cornaria* Ariosto's romance is quoted in the very beginning. The opening verse of the poem is a quotation of the *Furioso* in which Ariosto criticises common opinions: 'Comu spiss'erra lu giudiziu umanu, | Poi chi lu veru lumi è già perdutu | E di la dritta via ndi va luntanu!'<sup>417</sup> This verse is clearly a translation of a verse in canto I of the *Furioso*: 'ecco il giudicio uman come spesso erra!' (*Of* I, 7, 2). Ariosto's reflection refers to Orlando's decision to return to France with Angelica, which results in her flight from the Christian camp and eventually in his madness: because of his poor judgement, Orlando loses Angelica, who is taken by Charlemagne. Veneziano translates

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<sup>416</sup> The question of the possible identification of Veneziano's Ginevra with Queen Guinevere is posed by Caterina and Giuseppe Sulli in Sulli, *Antonio Veneziano: dal mistero di Celia al ...puttanesimo* (Palermo: Kefa - Lo Giudice, 1981), p. 289. It is noteworthy, however, that this anthology is not critically nor philologically reliable.

<sup>417</sup> *Cornaria* 1-3.

Ariosto's line and quotes it for its sententiousness, as also suggested by the connection with another well-known phrase evoking Dante ('che la dritta via era smarrita' *Inf.* I, 3). Ariosto's error is associated with Dante's, as the loss of reason, represented in the *Furioso* by Orlando's madness, leads to the moral loss of direction represented by Dante's 'selva'. Moreover, by contaminating Ariosto and Dante Veneziano parodies both, since the error discussed in *Cornaria* is that of considering being the victim of infidelity as dishonourable.

Dedicated to a friend who has been betrayed by his lover, *Cornaria* deals with the issue of women's betrayals by paradoxically arguing that 'chi li corna su hunuri | per novu stilu e per costume anticu, | cu favolusi e cu veri scrittori | per prosa e poesia'.<sup>418</sup> The author then plays with the metaphorical meaning of the *cornu* and the significance of the horn as object in the literary tradition. More importantly, Veneziano also establishes a dichotomy between writers of fiction ('favolosi') and writers concerned with the matter of the real ('veri scrittori'). However, the inclusion of both kinds within a combination of intertextual references and allusions that have authoritative value regardless of distinctions such as that of poetry and prose and of ancient and modern customs results in the suppression of a strictly demarcated critical difference between the 'favolosi' and the 'veri'.

Consequently, in *Cornaria Orlando furioso* features among authoritative references in a catalogue of recurrences of horns in myths, popular culture, and literature, including deities like Jupiter who turned into a bull and the horned Pan, the horned Zodiac signs Capricorn, Aries and Taurus, and the horns of Moses. In this list is included also the magical horn of Astolfo: 'mentr'happi Astolfu di inimici xhiaru | toccau lu cornu so di Logistilla | e di li danni soi fici ristauo'.<sup>419</sup> The magical horn, given by Logistilla to the paladin together with a magical book (*Of* XV, 13-15), is used by Astolfo on many occasions to disperse his enemies (*Of* XV, 53-54; XX 87-88; XXXIII 123-125) and plays a key role in the destruction of Atlante's illusions in canto XXII. In Veneziano's burlesque poem, Astolfo's magical object is listed as another example of the positive value to be attached to horns, so that its inclusion in a catalogue of illustrious examples results in the reaffirmation of the *Furioso* as a poetic model among the 'favolosi [...] scrittori' mentioned at the beginning of the poem.

Veneziano's *capitoli*, which are deserving of more critical attention, display a refined and erudite use of a complex combination and contamination of intertextual sources, as

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<sup>418</sup> *Cornaria* 11-14.

<sup>419</sup> *Cornaria* 82-84.

has already been observed with regard to *Celia*. While *Orlando furioso* is absorbed within the fabric of poetic references and subtexts underpinning the lyrical *canzuni*, it is cited explicitly in *Puttanismu* and *Cornaria*. In the former Veneziano satirically reverses the tradition of moralised commentary, a process resulting in the paradoxical subversion of Ariosto's characters, and in the latter he parodies the tradition of erudite praise including Ariosto among the authoritative examples in support of his argument. Many of the features of *Puttanismu* and *Cornaria* discussed so far are typical of the genre of paradoxical praise, in particular the addressing of the poem to a dedicatee, the use of *auctoritates* in order to legitimise paradoxical arguments and the lampooning of the philosophical and ethical humanistic tradition, identified by Silvia Longhi in her analysis of burlesque poetry.<sup>420</sup> Moreover, the objects of Veneziano's paradoxical praise were common in burlesque production in poetry as well as in prose, as discussed by Figorilli.<sup>421</sup> Veneziano then adopts the vernacular genre of burlesque poetry and introduces it into the tradition of Sicilian dialect poetry. Thus, Veneziano appropriated Ariosto's romance and adapted it to his dialect poetics: as demonstrated by the analysis of his works, *Orlando furioso* was disseminated across different genres in a variety of ways. Through the evoking of topical images and figures, citations of sentences, references to characters and episodes the presence of *Orlando furioso* is exhibited (or disguised) to different extents, so that Ariosto's poem constantly re-emerges through poetic adaptation.

## 12. ORLANDO FURIOSO AND THE SICILIAN ACADEMIES

Since the academies played a fundamental role in the promotion of the Tuscan vernacular and in the development of Sicily's literary culture, the cultural networks they fostered were particularly significant for the reception of *Orlando furioso*. The presence of Ariosto's romance in Sicilian academic production has already been mentioned with regard to Giuseppe Cumia, who was likely connected to the Accademia dei Solitari of Paolo Caggio, and Marco Filippi, a member of the same academy and author of the *Lettere sopra il Furioso dell'Ariosto*. In the development of Sicilian academic networks Caggio's academy was crucial as the precursor of the Accesi, whose significance is exemplified by two books of Petrarchan *Rime*, as seen in 6.2. Extremely receptive to coeval developments in mainland Italy, Sicilian academies and cultural circles engaged

<sup>420</sup> Silvia Longhi, *Lusus: il capitolo burlesco nel Cinquecento* (Padua: Antenore, 1983), pp. 139, 231.

<sup>421</sup> Maria Cristina Figorilli, *Meglio ignorante che dotto: l'elogio paradossale in prosa nel Cinquecento* (Naples: Liguori, 2008). Figorilli's study focusses on the paradoxical encomium in prose; on the paradoxical praise of *corna* see in particular pp. 37-38.

with the cultural debates that characterised Italian literary culture in the Cinquecento, up to and including the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle*. The presence of Ariosto's romance in the production connected with such environments, I will argue, demonstrates that the *Furioso* permeated different genres, and even reappeared in works that marginalised or rejected Ariosto's romance tradition in favour of Tasso's Christian epic.

The analysis of Cumia's poems has pointed to the reception of the *Furioso* as connected with vernacular Petrarchism. Significantly, we have seen, the first Sicilian academician Caggio, who was especially focussed on the promotion of the Petrarchan model in Sicily, mentions Ariosto's poem together with Petrarch in *Iconomica*. Taking into account Caggio's academic lectures more specifically, his main interest was Petrarch, as he gave two lectures focussed on his sonnets. Moreover, he also addressed literary and linguistic issues in his letters, including an epistle dedicated to the discussion of canto II of Dante's *Paradise*.<sup>422</sup> In one of the lectures he gave to fellow academicians, Caggio cites a passage from the *Furioso* as an example of Petrarchan imitation while discussing one of Petrarch's sonnets (*Rvf* CLII):

Egli [Petrarch] dà principio a questa sua fantasia paragonando Laura a due fere, ad una tigre et un'orsa. [...] Diceva egli in un altro luogo: 'non dico d'uom, ma un cor di tigre ed orso'. E un altro Poeta: 'ch'arebbe di pietà spezzato un sasso | una tigre crudel fatta clemente'. E 'l Sannazaro onor di Napoli: 'e cerco un tigre umiliar piangendo'.<sup>423</sup>

The verses Caggio quotes (*Of* I, 40, 5-6) without explicitly mentioning Ariosto or his poem are from the stanza preceding Sacripante's lament over Angelica's loss of virginity, which begins with the Petrarchan *topos* of the icy fire, thus showing that Caggio was very familiar with Ariosto, as suggested in 8.1. The modern Ariosto and Sannazaro are subsumed in Caggio's literary programme: this programme was aligned with Bembo's and centred especially around Petrarch, as exemplified by Caggio's Petrarchan poems in the *Sesto libro delle Rime di diversi eccellenti autori*, which he himself significantly refers to after quoting Ariosto and Sannazaro.<sup>424</sup>

When taking into account Caggio's Petrarchism, his citations of the *Furioso* can be considered symptomatic of a lyrical reception of Ariosto's poem that was crucially influenced by the centrality of the Petrarchan model, and therefore the centrality of the

<sup>422</sup> The two lectures are in *La 'Iconomica' di Paolo Caggio*, ed. by Giovanna Ratto (Palermo: l'Accademia, 1973); the epistles are in Giovanna Ratto, *Dall'epistolario di Paolo Caggio* ([n.p.]: [n. pub.], [1974(?)]), previously in *Bollettino del Centro di Studi filologici e linguistici siciliani*, 14.

<sup>423</sup> Caggio, *La 'Iconomica'*, ed. by Ratto (1973), p. 159. Caggio's lectures on Petrarch, included in a manuscript with his letters, were given to his fellow academicians in 1553 (Caggio, *La 'Iconomica'*, pp. 150-170). Sannazaro's quotation is from *Arcadia* ecl. II 99.

<sup>424</sup> *Il sesto libro delle rime di diversi eccellenti autori, nuovamente raccolte, et mandate in luce. Con un discorso di Girolamo Ruscelli* (Venice: Bonelli, 1553), H1<sup>r</sup>-H1<sup>v</sup>.

lyrical genre. The hypothesis of the association between Ariosto and Petrarch (and lyric poetry) in this first phase of the reception of *Orlando furioso* in Sicilian academies is supported by the analysis of the works of poets connected with Caggio, Filippi and Cumia: Filippi rewrites and amplifies the lyrical-elegiac dimension of the *Furioso* in his *Lettere sopra il Furioso* and Cumia juxtaposes and contaminates Ariosto's characters and episodes with lyrical and Petrarchan *topoi* in his *Rime*.

After the brief activity of the Solitari, the Accademia degli Accesi followed in its footsteps with regard to the promotion of the vernacular in Sicily, exemplified by their books of *Rime*. More importantly, the most prominent member of the academy, Antonio Alfano, also wrote the *Battaglia di Michele e Lucifero*, an *ottava rima* poem of religious subject matter reportedly written to oppose the spreading of chivalric romances among the people. Published in Palermo in 1568, the *Battaglia* is the first poem entirely dedicated to Lucifer's rebellion and fall as well as the first of a group of poems dedicated to the matter of Satan's uprising, namely Amico Agnifilo's *Il caso di Lucifero* (1582), Erasmo di Valvasone's *Angeleida* (1590) and Giovanni Battista Composto's *La caduta di Lucifero* (1613).<sup>425</sup> However, the works of Agnifilo, Valvasone and Composto were written after the publication of *Gerusalemme liberata* and therefore were especially influenced by Tasso's Christian epic and poetics. Aware of the originality of his work, Alfano claims the novelty of his subject matter with regard to both vernacular and Latin literature, likely referring to religious poems such as Jacopo Sannazzaro's *De partu Virginis* (1526) and Girolamo Vida's *Christias* (1535). Compared with the previous tradition, however, Alfano's Christian epic poem concerning a rebellion against the divine order is ostensibly influenced by the cultural climate of the Catholic Reformation, as the dedication of the poem to two Inquisitors, don Giovanni Bezerra della Quadra and Giovanni Retana, also indicates.

More importantly, in the first letter to the dedicatees Alfano explains that his choice of subject is intended to counteract the success of chivalric tales among the people, writing that it seems fitting that 'se per le piazza alle volte ragionar s'ode dell'arme d'Orlando, e di Rinaldo (sogni, e favole de i poeti) [...] alcuna volta ragionar si senta di questa prima, vera et celeste battaglia'.<sup>426</sup> Alfano condemns the chivalric tales of Orlando and Rinaldo's deeds by defining them as fiction in opposition to the truth of his religious

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<sup>425</sup> Antonio Alfano, *La battaglia celeste tra Michele e Lucifero* (Palermo: Mayda, 1568); Erasmo da Valvasone, *Angeleida* [...] (Venice: Sommasco, 1590); Amico Agnifilo, *Il Caso di Lucifero* [...] (L'Aquila: Dagano, 1582); Composto, *La Caduta di Lucifero* [...] (Naples: Carlino, 1613). Of Valvasone's *Angeleida* there is also a modern edition edited by Luciana Borsetto (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2005).

<sup>426</sup> Alfano, *Battaglia*, A2<sup>v</sup>.



subject, a position consistent with the suspicious attitude towards chivalric romances during the post-Tridentine cultural developments discussed in Part Three.

However, the chivalric romance tradition was not entirely suppressed. In her analysis of the *Battaglia*, Irene Bagni has pointed out that, despite Alfano's criticism of romances and their didactic value, he makes use of common romance devices and themes that have the function of diversifying and expanding the narrative: such devices merely aim to vary and expand the narrative poetically and do not reflect the poet's worldview.<sup>427</sup> Addressing the influence of the chivalric code in the *Battaglia*, moreover, Luciana Borsetto has observed that the epic trope of the battle between champions is developed in chivalric terms, as Lucifer and Michael accuse each other of discourteous and unchivalrous conduct.<sup>428</sup> Finally, Mazzamuto has more generally pointed out Alfano's eclectic imitation of Dante, Petrarch and Ariosto with regard respectively to the poem's cosmological concepts, idyllic and lyrical parts and heroic-epic outcome.

Despite his explicit rejection of chivalric tales, Alfano echoes Boiardo's *Orlando innamorato* in the very first verse of his poem, as highlighted by Bagni.<sup>429</sup> Moreover, the second stanza begins with 'Dirò', which echoes the first verse of Ariosto's second stanza in canto I:

Dirò poscia d'aver gran tempo in forse  
stat'io per questa mia non colta penna  
s'ella dovesse a tanto rischio porse  
o pur a sì gran mar ceder la 'ntenna.  
Vinse alfin il desio ch'a l'alma corse  
e a sodisfar al debito m'accenna,  
non potendo all'honor del gran Michele  
onde a l'aura del ciel sciolsi le vele.

*Bc I, 1*

Alfano intervenes directly to justify his poetic shortcomings with the difficulty of his illustrious subject: in the corresponding stanza (*Of I, 2*) Ariosto justifies his possible inability to deliver what he promised because he is hindered by his love. While in the *Furioso* the poet is comparing himself to his character, associating poetic weakness with

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<sup>427</sup> Irene Bagni, 'La battaglia celeste tra Michele e Lucifero' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Pisa, 2013), pp. 23-4. Bagni's work is a doctoral dissertation consisting of a critical edition of Alfano's poem; it is equipped with a lengthy introduction focussing on the narrative strategies characterising the poems on Lucifer's rebellion (Alfano, Agnifilo, Composto), with a particular attention to Alfano.

<sup>428</sup> Luciana Borsetto, 'La "battaglia celeste" nella tradizione del poema sacro rinascimentale. L'*Angeleida* di Erasmo di Valvasone', in *Dopo Tasso. Percorsi del poema eroico. Atti del Convegno di Studi, Urbino, 15 e 16 giugno 2004* ed. by Guido Arbizzoni, Marco Faini e Tiziana Mattioli (Roma-Padova: Antenore, 2005) pp. 311-352 (p. 326).

<sup>429</sup> Bagni, *La battaglia celeste*.

love madness, Alfano's justification is developed in a conventional way within a stanza in which the poet describes his enterprise as a sailing voyage, a traditional poetic metaphor also employed by Ariosto to introduce the last canto of the *Furioso* (XLVI, I), albeit in a more unconventional way.<sup>430</sup> More importantly, Alfano echoes Ariosto especially when adopting the *entrelacement* technique (*Bc* I, 68 1-2; III, 34, 7-8) and in two other cases (*Bc* I, 78-83; III, 82, 8), in reference to the description of Logistilla's garden and to Lucifer as 'mancator di fe' (*Of* I, 26, 6).<sup>431</sup> Alfano, who aims at redressing the popularity of chivalric romances, in fact appropriates the romance tradition of Boiardo and Ariosto and therefore revives it while censoring it.

The *Battaglia* was influenced by the poetic theory of *poetica theologia*, the notion that under the fiction of poetry lay theological truth; a notion that, as seen in 4.3, served to justify the classics, including *Orlando furioso*, within a Christian worldview. Alfano elaborates on his poetics by explaining that the subject of his poem, the celestial battle, is 'scritta sotto le similitudini, e le metaphore ancorche mental fosse, et in un batter d'occhio, o meno fornita, e cio fatto per potersi esplicar meglio, e darsi ad intendere perche le cose spirituali et Invisibili da queste visibili, et carnali, s'intendono, et conoscono'.<sup>432</sup> Through the symbolic metaphor of the celestial battle the poet expresses abstract religious concepts: Satan's rebellion against God is a clear metaphor referring to rebellion against the Church and God's victory prefigures the Church's eventual triumph. Alfano, then, aims to balance poetry and theology by adapting the epic and romance code to a new subject complying with the cultural urges of the period.

Significantly, in reference to chivalric romances the Sicilian poet employs an expression ('sogni, e favole de i poeti') that meaningfully echoes a Petrarchan verse from *Triumphus Cupidinis*: after remembering the late fellow poet Tommaso Caloiro, Petrarch comments that 'ben è 'l viver mortal, che sì n'aggrada, | sogno d'infermi e fole di romanzi' (*TC* IV 65-66). Romances are not only connected with the carnal dimension but also with the idea of infirmity: they are represented as illusions eventually dispelled by death. Within the allegorical framework of the *Trionfi*, Petrarch's mention of romances occurs among a long list of poets, from Latin to Provençal backgrounds, who are enslaved by Love, so that romances are also associated with the erotic dimension. Significantly, romance heroes are not only defined as errant but also as characters in stories filled with

<sup>430</sup> Zatti, *The Quest for Epic*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>431</sup> On these references see Bagni tesi pp. 106, 108. See also her comments to Alfano's text pp. 155, 214, 229. *BC* I 68, 1-2 evokes *Of* XXX 17, 3-4.

<sup>432</sup> Alfano, *Battaglia*, A2<sup>v</sup>. Bagni points out that the idea that abstract concepts could be represented only through metaphors and similes was traditional and grounded in religious exegesis. Bagni, *La battaglia celeste*, pp. 101-102.

dreams ('Ecco quei che le carte empion di sogni | Lancillotto, Tristano e gli altri erranti, | ove convien che 'l vulgo errante agogni' *TC* III 79-01).

The negative connotation Petrarch attaches to romances has an illustrious precedent in Dante's *Commedia*, which is Petrarch's main model in the *Trionfi*. Significantly, it is particularly canto V of Dante's *Inferno* that Petrarch evokes in *Triumphus Cupidinis*, which can be viewed as a revision of Dante's canto.<sup>433</sup> In canto V Dante condemns Arthurian romances for the nefarious impact they have on their readers, as they led astray Paolo and Francesca by setting the negative example of the illicit love of Lancelot and Guinevere (*Inf.* V 127-137). Dante's condemnation of romances is also evident from the inclusion of Tristan among the lustful sinners in the same canto (*Inf.* V 67) and the mention of Mordred as a negative example of treachery (*Inf.* XXXII 61-62). As noted by Christopher Kleinhenz, in the *Commedia* Dante rejects and condemns the courtly tradition, including romances, because it poses a danger from a spiritual perspective.<sup>434</sup> This tradition of criticism of romances is particularly significant because Petrarch's expression is also employed by two other members of the Accesi, Marco Filippi, as we have seen with regard to the *Vita di Santa Caterina* in chapter 10, and Leonardo Orlandini.

A native of Trapani, the canon Leonardo Orlandini (1552-1618) was Prince of the Accesi and a central figure in Sicilian academic networks.<sup>435</sup> In the letter to the reader he wrote to introduce Matteo Donia's heroic poem *Giorgio* (1599) Orlandini addresses issues of poetics and rejects the romance tradition.<sup>436</sup> Orlandini states that authors who write about religious and Christian subjects in praise of God are worthier than those who 'ragionano di cose vane, cantan amor lascivi, narran sogni d'infermi, e fole di romanzi, et adulano or questo, o quell'altro Principe terreno ingannati da vane promesse, e caduche speranze'. It is easy to recognise Ariosto's poem in this categorisation. Once again, romance and courtly material is rejected as a dangerous earthly illusion.

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<sup>433</sup> Thomas Hyde, *The Poetic Theology of Love: Cupid in Renaissance Literature* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1986), p.67.

<sup>434</sup> Christopher Kleinhenz, 'Dante as Reader and Critic of Courtly Literature', in *Courtly Literature: Culture and Context. Proceedings of the 5th triennial Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Dalfsen, The Netherlands, 9-16 Aug. 1986* ed. by Keith Busby, Erik Kooper (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1990), pp. 379-393 (particularly p.385). On Dante and Arthurian romances see also Daniela Delcorno Branca, 'Romanzi arturiani', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, 6 vols (Rome, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970-1978), IV, pp. 1028-1030.

<sup>435</sup> On Orlandini and his academic profile I refer to IAD (<http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/ItalianAcademies/PersonFullDisplay.aspx?RecordId=022-000005253>) and to Montoliu's database ([https://fmserver-dar.univ-tlse2.fr/fmi/webd/#BaseAcademiciciens\\_12&lay=Accademicici&viewstyle=form&record=1&mode=browse](https://fmserver-dar.univ-tlse2.fr/fmi/webd/#BaseAcademiciciens_12&lay=Accademicici&viewstyle=form&record=1&mode=browse)) [accessed 1-9-2018]

<sup>436</sup> Matteo Donia, *Il Giorgio, poema sacro et heroico [...] Con un breve discorso del r. sig. d. Leonardo Orlandini et Greco, [...] (Palermo: Maringo, 1599).*

More importantly, Orlandini provides examples of authors of poems aligned with his theoretical recommendations, starting with Teofilo Folengo, cited as the repentant author of a burlesque poem. Orlandini is referring to the *Umanità del figliuolo di Dio*, which he also quotes (*UfD* I 4) and which was written to redress the previous burlesque works of the author. Among the authors mentioned are also Sannazaro for his *De partu virginis*, Vida for his *Christias*, Tansillo for the *Lagrima di San Pietro*, and Filippi for the *Vita di Santa Caterina*.<sup>437</sup> The distinction, then, between all these works and romances, including the *Furioso*, appears unambiguous, since courtly poetry and romances are indicated as in opposition to the Christian spiritual dimension which poetry is supposed to conform to and promote.

Orlandini also tackled the issue of the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle*, which entered the Sicilian academic environment. While he accords his preference for Tasso, he makes some interesting remarks on the *Furioso* and the *Liberata* that reveal a more nuanced position towards Ariosto. He defines the latter as a painter who ‘pingendo diversamente molte nobili attioni canta le donne, i cavalier, l’arme, gli amori’ while Tasso ‘oltre al riguardo della unica attione illustre propria della epopea, freggiandola con vaghe digresioni sol canta quel pietoso capitano’.<sup>438</sup> The choice of the word ‘pinge’ and ‘freggiandola’ in reference to Ariosto and Tasso respectively is particularly meaningful because, before discussing epic poetry, Orlandini makes a comparison between painting and sculpture, giving the primacy to the latter. Sculpture, he argues, is the most noble because it better resists time and is more long-lasting, while painting does not last, as the loss of masterpieces by artists such as Apelles and Zeuxis shows. Thus, Ariosto’s work is implicitly compared to those that will be lost because of time and Tasso’s poem to a vivid long-lasting sculpture: the association of the *Furioso*, whose canvas is nonetheless a work of art, with the concept of vanity is here reinforced in opposition to the eternity of Tasso’s Christian poem. Since Orlandini rejects Ariosto’s romance worldview while simultaneously acknowledging his artistry, his position with regard to the *Furioso* becomes far more ambiguous than it seemed at the beginning.

This ambiguity is reflected in the Sicilian epic poems written in the aftermath of the *Liberata*, whose publication marked an increase in the production of Sicilian epic poetry between the end of the Cinquecento and the Seicento. The preference for Tasso is evident from the flourishing of poems based on the model of Tasso’s Christian epic, namely Matteo Donia’s *Giorgio* (1599), whose composition dates back to the author’s youth,

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<sup>437</sup> Donia, +2<sup>v</sup> - +3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>438</sup> Donia, +2<sup>v</sup>.

Vincenzo Di Giovanni's *Palermo triunfante* (1600), Francesco Potenzano's *la Distruttione di Gerusalemme* (1600), and Tomaso Ballo's *Palermo liberato* (1612).<sup>439</sup>

Matteo Donia's work is the first of this series of Tasso-inspired poems and its complete title is, meaningfully, *Giorgio. Poema sacro et heroico*. It is a heroic poem in six cantos on Saint George and his fight against the dragon. Donia's debt to Tasso is clear from the first stanza of the poem, which is modelled on *Gl I, 1* and also implies the analogy between the fight of the Saint and contemporary religious conflicts:

Canto l'heroe, l'intrepido guerriero  
di Cappadocia, l'occisor del drago;  
da cui schernito e vinto fu il più fiero  
tiranno, sol de l'altrui stratio vago;  
gli idoli sparsi a terra fur, l'impero  
posto in bisbiglio, e in sommo honor l'imgo  
da l'alma croce, ch'ei portar usava  
vermiglia in petto alhor ch'armato andava.<sup>440</sup>

Donia's poem is, then, consistent with the critical directions for epic poetry Orlandini laid out in his introduction to the poem. However, the *Palermo triunfante*, whose authorship is disputed between Vincenzo di Giovanni and his brother Girolamo, is also characterised by elements reminiscent of Ariosto.<sup>441</sup> In *Palermo triunfante*, which follows Tasso's poetics in dealing with an historical event, the conflict between Palermo and Carthage, the presence of both Tasso and Ariosto is evident from the first stanza:

L'arme, il senno, il valor l'invitto core  
canto io d'un sommo, e memorabil duce,  
che d'aurati trofei di ricchi honori  
a pari d'ogni altro heroe splende e trasluce.  
Porgete allor altar suavi oddori,  
mentre Apollo al mio dir si riconduce,  
che a cercare io ne vo, con saldo zelo,  
Pindo, Aganippe, e Delfo, e Cintho, e Delo.<sup>442</sup>

The four-element structure of the first line echoes the *Furioso*'s very beginning, but the subject of the narrative are the deeds of an exemplary leader (in this case the homonym of the city, who aided Scipio Africanus against Carthage), after Tasso's fashion.

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<sup>439</sup> Vincenzo Di Giovanni, *Palermo triunfante* [...] *Ove si scrive la famosissima guerra tra i palermitani, e i cartaginesi* (Palermo: Maringo, 1599). Francesco Potenzano, *La distruttione di Gerusalemme dall'Imperatore Tito Vespasiano* (Naples: Pace, 1600). Tomaso Ballo, *Palermo liberato* [...] (Palermo: Maringo, 1612).

<sup>440</sup> Donia, A1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>441</sup> Mazzamuto, p. 342. Mazzamuto generically mentions 'ricalchi ariosteschi' and considers Vincenzo's brother, Girolamo, to be the author of the *Palermo trionfante*. On Vincenzo di Giovanni's life and works see Rosario Contarino, 'Di Giovanni, Vincenzo', in *DBI*, XL (1991), pp. 46-47.

<sup>442</sup> Di Giovanni, A3<sup>r</sup>.

Moreover, the names of some characters are reminiscent of Ariosto's, such as Grifone, Zerbino, and Isabella, and the author intervenes as narrator to reprise Ariosto's web metaphor as well as to manage the various episodes emulating the Ferrarese poet.<sup>443</sup> Thus, the romance literary devices and echoes of the *Furioso* found in Tasso's epigones show that the romance tradition and Ariosto's poem were not erased but rather appropriated and incorporated in their epics through contamination with Tasso and therefore salvaged while poetically marginalised.

Alfano and Orlandini were prominent members of the Accesi, who were connected to other important academies and cultural circles. In his poem *Donia*, who was also associated with Moncada's cultural circle, mentions an Accademia degli Sregolati, of which nothing else is known beside the name.<sup>444</sup> Beside Orlandini's essays, *Donia's Giorgio* is introduced by two sonnets, one by Andrea Blasi and one by Giovan Antonio Brandi, author of a *Rosario di Maria Vergine santissima poema sacro* (1595). A sonnet by Brandi, who appears not to have been connected to any academy, accompanies also the *Poema sacro della passione et morte di santi dieci mila martiri* (1600) by Ottavio Potenzano, another member of the Accesi. Ottavio's brother Francesco, who has already been mentioned as the author of the Tasso-inspired epic *Le distruzione di Gerusalemme*, was a painter and a member of the Accesi as well as the Opportuni; Potenzano was also connected to prominent Sicilian poets including Antonio Veneziano.<sup>445</sup> Veneziano exemplifies this web of cultural, artistic and poetic connections because of his association with the Accesi, the Opportuni, the Risoluti, and the cultural circle under the patronage of Moncada.

Thus, Sicilian academies did not only promote the development of vernacular and dialect Petrarchism, but also fostered the circulation of texts and ideas. Ariosto first entered the Sicilian literary background as a vernacular model for poetry on a par with Petrarch. Despite the acceptance of the *Furioso* as literary model and its success among the people, however, Sicily lacked a *corpus* of chivalric poems even after the publication

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<sup>443</sup> 'Hor dunque a far che pongasi ad effetto | e si venga a compir la tela ordita, | a quale mostrar che sia benigno il petto. | Siane ogni orecchia a questa voce unita | ch'oggi io prometto a pubblico diletto | cosa nuova portar, cosa inaudita, | cosa, da far, per u sian piani, e monti; | fisar le luci, e tubidar le fronti' (Di Giovanni, A3<sup>v</sup>) 'Così si mettono essi ambo in camino, | hor lasciamoli far qualche giornada, ch'è tempo homai di ritrovar Zerbino, | quel che cammina sol per dubbia strada' (Di Giovanni, G3<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>444</sup> See the author's letter to the reader (*Donia*, H3<sup>v</sup>-H4<sup>v</sup>).

<sup>445</sup> I refer particularly to the *Rime di diversi eccel. autori in lingua siciliana. Al illustre pittore poeta S. Francesco Potenzano palermitano. Con le risposte maravigliose del medesimo nella istessa lingua siciliana*. (Naples: Salviani, 1582). Francesco Potenzano and Sicilian culture have recently been explored by Agata Farruggio in 'Francesco Potenzano pittore e poeta (1552-1601). Rapporti tra arte, storia e letteratura nella Sicilia del Vicereame spagnolo' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Catania, 2010) (<[http://archivia.unict.it/bitstream/10761/298/1/tesi\\_dottorato\\_agata\\_farruggio.pdf](http://archivia.unict.it/bitstream/10761/298/1/tesi_dottorato_agata_farruggio.pdf)>) [accessed 1 September 2017].

of Ariosto's masterpiece. A prose romance by the Sicilian Antonio Filoteo Omodei, *La notabile, et famosa historia del felice innamoramento del Delfino di Francia, et di Angelina Loria, nobile siciliana* [...] (1562), was published in Venice and very likely composed during the author's sojourn in Rome. Epic poetry in Sicily was generally characterised by encomiastic and religious themes, particularly after the *Liberata*.<sup>446</sup>

More importantly, after the Council of Trent and with Tasso's poem having provided an epic model compliant with Counter-Reformation values, the literary works connected with the academies seemed to share the rejection of Ariosto's romance worldview, the preference for Tasso and an approach to poetry influenced by *poetica theologia*. This shaped the reception of the *Furioso* in Sicily as it allowed its dissemination and incorporation into the cultural background at the same time as Ariosto's poem was being subject to severe criticism. As a result, the ambiguous reception of the *Furioso* also allowed its appropriation in works that appear to oppose it, such as Filippi's hagiography *Vita di Santa Caterina*. As we have seen, Filippi's poem particularly showcases these dynamics of rejection and simultaneous persistence that underpin the dissemination of the *Furioso* in new genres and cultural domains.

Furthermore, my discussion of Sicilian academies shows that Marco Filippi was certainly part of a broader network of Sicilian *ariostismo*, including Caggio, the Accesi and Donia, as also indicated by the sharing of Petrarch's condemnation of romances and recurrent citation of 'sogni d'infermi e fole di romanzi'. Though their connection has yet to be proved beyond doubt, it is already possible to envisage a cultural web fostering the incorporation of *Orlando furioso* into its cultural background and thus its dissemination and penetration into an extremely varied range of genres.

The analysis of the multifarious facets of the adaptation of the *Furioso* to very diverse contexts including court music, vernacular and dialect lyric poetry, burlesque poetry, and Tasso-modelled epic poetry, has shown not only the continuous significant presence of the *Furioso* in the Sicilian literary background but also its preservation through adaptation and transformation. The reception of the *Furioso* in academic networks, which championed Tasso over Ariosto, especially reveals the re-emergence of the romance even in works and discourses that explicitly reject and marginalise it. Filippi's poem is

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<sup>446</sup> The date of Omodei's travel to Rome is not certain but he was there by 1565. See Alessandro Ottavini, 'Degli Omodei, Antonio Filoteo', in *DBI*, LXXIX (2013), pp. 308-310. *La notabile, et famosa historia del felice innamoramento del Delfino di Francia, et di Angelina Loria, nobile siciliana. Nuovamente ritrouata et dall'antica lingua normanna tradotta nella commune italiana* (Venice: Tramezzino, 1562). It is noteworthy that Tramezzino, who was active in Rome and Venice between the 1530s and 1570s, published several chivalric works, particularly Mambrino Roseo's translations of Spanish romances. For an overview of Sicilian epic production see Mazzamuto.

symptomatic of this tendency and is significantly characterised by a tension between exhibited references and allusions to the *Furioso* on the one hand and its ideological demonisation on the other. This tension, eventually resulting in the salvaging of Ariosto's romance, especially distinguishes the religious re-envisioning of Vincenzo Marino, in which it is taken to an extreme level. The last Part of this thesis will, then, focus on this author's *Furioso spirituale* and explore its dynamic relation with Ariosto.



# PART FIVE. THEOLOGISING *ORLANDO FURIOSO*

## 13. VINCENZO MARINO'S *FURIOSO SPIRITUALE*: THE *ORLANDO FURIOSO* BETWEEN COUNTER-REFORMATION CRITICISM AND RELIGIOUS EXEGESIS

### 13.1 Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale* (1596): a recent discovery, a mysterious work

Vincenzo Marino's *Furioso spirituale*, published by Brea in Messina in 1596, is a rare and mysterious work discovered only recently thanks to Carmen Puglisi.<sup>447</sup> As the only work aiming to rewrite not only one of the parts of the *Furioso*, like Scanello's *Primo canto dell'Ariosto*, but the entire romance, Marino's poem is deserving of particular attention. Marino's relation to Ariosto is significantly characterised by the rejection of the *Furioso* on explicitly ideological grounds and its simultaneous adaptation and incorporation within a new discourse. The *Furioso spirituale*, then, takes to its extreme the dynamic between legitimation and subversion that has been identified as underpinning the rewritings of Filippi and Scanello, albeit to different degrees. My analysis will demonstrate that the dynamic co-presence of such apparently opposite elements results in the concurrent reinstatement and subversion of *Orlando furioso* even in a work which ostensibly aims at effacing it.

Marino's project seems to have been massive, since he mentions three books in the introductory letter to the dedicatee, Giovanni III Ventimiglia. However, the only surviving, and possibly the only realised, book is the first, divided into 13 cantos, for a total of 1,663 stanzas. Its discovery was due to the presence of the title in the list of books owned by the Prior of a Cremonese monastery of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis, a certain Jacopo Filippo Zucchello.<sup>448</sup> This list was one of the lists of books requested by

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<sup>447</sup> To date, Puglisi's contribution is the only one on Marino's work. Carmen Puglisi, 'Fra passione umana e divina: il *Furioso spirituale* di Vincenzo Marino', in *In nobili civitate messanae. Contributi alla storia dell'editoria e della circolazione del libro antico in Sicilia, seminario di studi Montalbano Elicona 27-28 maggio 2011*, ed. by Giuseppe Lipari (Messina: Università degli studi di Messina, Centro internazionale di studi umanistici, 2013), pp. 287-300.

<sup>448</sup> Rici database: *Le biblioteche degli ordini regolari in Italia alla fine del secolo XVI* <<http://rici.vatlib.it/>> [accessed 1 September 2017] Marino's works are listed under his name: <http://rici.vatlib.it/Ricerche.asp> [accessed 27 July 2018]

the Congregation of the Index from convents and monasteries after the publication of the Clementine Index until 1603. Puglisi, who offers only a cursory overview of the cultural developments underpinning the fashion of religious rewritings and few broad observations on Marino's text, nevertheless provides precise biographical and bibliographical details about Marino, noting that mentions of the *Furioso spirituale* can be found only in few works and that these simply refer to the one in Giovanni degli Agostini's *Notizie istorico critiche intorno la vita e le opera degli scrittori viniziani* (1752-1754).<sup>449</sup> The presence of the *Furioso spirituale* in a Franciscan monastery may arguably support the hypothesis of the author's belonging to such an order, especially when also considering the many sermonising references to St. Francis and Franciscan values in his work; moreover, the fact that both the existing copies were found in Sicilian Capuchin monasteries and may point to the circulation of the book in monastic spheres.<sup>450</sup> The fact that Marino's work was allegedly held in a Cremonese monastery, furthermore, suggests that the book circulated also outside of Sicily.

Vincenzo Marino himself is a mysterious figure as details about his life and works are scant. Besides the *Furioso spirituale*, he also appears to be the author of a volume entitled *Rime volgari sopra li sette psalmi penitenziali*, which was published in Messina by Bufalini in 1593 but is now lost.<sup>451</sup> The little information we have on Marino derives from his only work available to us, the *Furioso spirituale*. On the title page, the author defines himself as 'Padre Vincenzo Marino, prete solitario della città di Messina', from which we can assume that he was a priest. What is meant by 'solitario', however, is not clear; he may be loosely referring to a secluded lifestyle, perhaps within a religious order. No other information can be derived from the *Furioso spirituale*, since, although it is accompanied by poems (mostly sonnets), these are all characterised by conventional religious themes and provide no evidence of specific connections with other poets. Marino's title clearly evokes the religious rewritings of Malipiero and Dionigi da Fano discussed in Part Three. Though it is impossible to know for certain if he was familiar with either, it is noteworthy that the choice to indicate the title of Ariosto's poem seems to have been influenced by the *Decameron spirituale* rather than the *Petrarca spirituale* and that Dionigi's rewriting features a citation of a verse of the *Furioso* in support of the

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<sup>449</sup> Puglisi, p. 294. In Degli Agostini's work the *Furioso spirituale* is mentioned with other religious rewritings in relation to Malipiero. Giovanni Degli Agostini, *Notizie istorico critiche intorno la vita e le opera degli scrittori viniziani*, 2 vols (Venice: Occhi, 1754), II, p. 445.

<sup>450</sup> Puglisi, pp. 294-295. The two known copies of Marino's work are currently held in the public library of Castoreale and in the Capuchin library of Messina. In my analysis I refer to the latter (Biblioteca Provinciale dei Cappuccini di Messina, 64/C/256). Though the first pages of the ottavo book, including especially the title page, are slightly damaged it is still possible to discern the title and most of the text.

<sup>451</sup> Puglisi, pp. 296.

author's argument.<sup>452</sup> Moreover, Marino intended to rewrite not only the *Furioso* but also the *Cinque Canti*, as evident from their mention in the title (*Il Furioso spirituale distinto in tre libri, con i cinque suoi canti al fine*).

The *Furioso spirituale* is introduced by a letter to the dedicatee Giovanni III Ventimiglia, which is followed by two religious sonnets, a letter to the readers, and five more religious sonnets, all by Marino.<sup>453</sup> The choice of the dedicatee, who was Marquis of Geraci (Siculo) and *stratigotus* of Messina from 1588 to 1589 and from 1592 to 1594, is interesting given the Marquis' connection with the contemporary literary debate and with Torquato Tasso. A member of the prominent Ventimiglia family and a patron of the arts, as noted in Part Four, Giovanni III was a patron of Tasso, whom the Marquis supported financially.<sup>454</sup> Tasso's relationship with Ventimiglia has recently been reconstructed by Orazio Cancila. Ventimiglia, who was particularly interested in having his ancestry celebrated encomiastically, never met Tasso in person but had contacts with him through letters and through an intermediary, the Olivetan priest Niccolò Degli Oddi. because of the support of the Marquis, Tasso apparently planned to write a poem to celebrate the House of Ventimiglia.<sup>455</sup>

Moreover, Degli Oddi, who spent some time in Palermo, was a friend of Tasso and a supporter of his poem in the Ariosto/Tasso debate. His *Dialogo in difesa di Camillo Pellegrini*<sup>456</sup> is dedicated to Ventimiglia, who features as one of the three protagonists together with the Palermitan Bartolo Sirillo and Filippo Paruta. Both Sirillo and Paruta defend Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* and espouse Pellegrini's critique of *Orlando furioso*. Resting on the Aristotelian principles predominant at the time, the *Dialogo* clearly sides with Tasso and is strongly critical of the Accademici della Crusca. The Crusca and their critique of Tasso are in fact the main target rather than Ariosto's romance, as evident from the fact that, accused of defaming a man who cannot defend himself, Paruta acknowledges Ariosto's excellence in the field of romance poetry adding that 'niuno l'offende morto, niuno lo chiama in giudicio, niuno lo condanna; guardinsi

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<sup>452</sup> Andrea Torre, 'Il silenzio di Boccaccio. Note su una controparodia di fine Cinquecento', *Levia Gravia*, XV-XVI (2013-2014), 515-530 (pp. 527-528).

<sup>453</sup> At the end of canto I are also nine *Sonetti sopra la fame* and two sonnets dedicated to St. Placidus; at the end of canto XIII, the last of the volume, are six *Sonetti allo libro*, followed by seven *Sonetti in lode della beata Vergine*. All these are by Marino.

<sup>454</sup> As clear from a letter of 1589 to Ventimiglia (*Le lettere di Torquato Tasso disposte per ordine di tempo ed illustrate*, ed. by Cesare Guasti, 5 vols (Florence: Le Monnier, 1852-1855), IV, pp. 241-242).

<sup>455</sup> Tasso, *Lettere*, V, pp. 164-165. Cancila, *I Ventimiglia di Geraci (1258-1619)*, II, pp. 372-381. It is noteworthy, moreover, that also Paolo Beni's second edition of the *Comparatione di Torquato Tasso con Homero, Virgilio* (Padua: Martini, 1612) is dedicated to Ventimiglia. For Ventimiglia's biography see Grazia Fallico, 'Giovanni Ventimiglia marchese di Geraci', in *DBI*, LIII (2000), pp. 306-309.

<sup>456</sup> Niccolò Degli Oddi, *Dialogo di don Nicolo de gli Oddi padovano in difesa di Camillo Pellegrini. Contra gli Academici della Crusca* (Venice: Guerra, 1587).

pure questo Signori Academici, che le condanne non sieno le loro difese, et che lo sdegno loro col Tasso non risulti in danno, e biasimo dell'Ariosto, fuori dell'intentione che hanno'.<sup>457</sup>

Since most of the arguments are put forward by Sirillo and Paruta, and are therefore in favour of Tasso, Ventimiglia's role in the dialogue is quite limited: he acts as the defender of the *Furioso* but his observations have the function of offering a chance for the others to argue their case rather than that of debunking their observations or defending the Accademici della Crusca. Nonetheless, within the dialogue Ventimiglia 'giudica il Furioso di tanto avanzare la Gierusalemme, che tra essi non cada comparatione niuna'.<sup>458</sup> I would therefore suggest that Marino's choice of dedicating a religious rewriting of the *Furioso* to Ventimiglia was influenced by his preference for Ariosto as suggested in Degli Oddi's work.

### 13.2 Against Ariosto: escaping Polyphemus and stopping Goliath

Marino's intentions are explicitly stated from the beginning. In the letter to the dedicatee he lays out the reasons which led him to rewrite the *Furioso* revealing his utter condemnation of Ariosto. It is the danger, Marino explains, posed by Ariosto's poem that made it necessary to neutralise the devastating power of the *Furioso*, significantly compared to Polyphemus and Goliath:

[*Orlando furioso*] mi pare, come quel gigante nostro ciclope monocolo, che rinchiude nell'antro il virtuoso Ulisse, con li compagni a morte, e così chiusi si li divora e magna; fuggendone via il Capitano solo; per dinotare che pochi sono quelli, i quali legendo un libro giganteo tale, che da lui devorati non muoiono, voglio dir che invaghiti dalle finta beltà non faccin mille peccati, e mille errori. Anzi mi parra come quell'altro gigante Golia, che con tante superstitioni e vani incanti va incantando e va isprobandando le nostre Israelite squadre, convince gli huomini christiani a dar l'inciampo nelle lascivie e vanità sue.<sup>459</sup>

*Orlando furioso* is likened to Polyphemus for its scale as well as its calamitous effects: like the mythical cyclops, Ariosto's romance captures and devours its readers, with very few exceptions. Just as Goliath tried to enchant Israel, moreover, the *Furioso* bewitches Christians and goads them into its vanity and lasciviousness. Through the Polyphemus metaphor Marino stresses the danger of Ariosto's narrative: the few survivors are still drawn in by its deceptive beauty, which leads to sin and errors. Resistance is therefore

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<sup>457</sup> Degli Oddi, B4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>458</sup> Degli Oddi, A5<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>459</sup> Marino, *Furioso spirituale*, A3<sup>r</sup>-A3<sup>v</sup>.

possible but exceptional. Compared with the Philistine giant Goliath, the *Furioso* is also associated with religious unorthodoxy. Marino's aim is, then, to oppose the detrimental stimulus emanating from the *Furioso*: 'tentai d'oppormi a tanto incentivo, a tanto fuoco'.<sup>460</sup> The intent of the Sicilian priest, who espouses the equivalence between romance errancy and sin, is clear: to counteract the dangers posed by Ariosto's romance by wholly rejecting its narrative as unorthodox and therefore unacceptable.

However, despite the author's intention to challenge Ariosto, Marino's actual references and allusions to *Orlando furioso* are few and far between throughout his rewriting, and only sporadically does he directly engage with the romance, mostly at an interpretative level. Marino's poem is homiletic in nature rather than narrative and aims to illustrate and divulge religious and doctrinal principles. Thus, for instance, the first canto elaborates on Marino's choice of a religious subject and denounces men's worldly errors and distractions, among which are classical and profane poetry, while the second canto discusses the superiority of divine love. In other cases, Marino explains doctrinal concepts, such as the Trinity in canto VIII, or engages with religious-related issues, such as worldly ambitions and prelature in canto VII. In order to illustrate his arguments, Marino refers to a variety of sources, including especially the Bible and patristic literature, classical mythology, and history, similarly to how, in the letter to Ventimiglia, he refers to both Polyphemus and Goliath to illustrate the dangerousness of Ariosto's romance. Within this context, the references and allusions to the *Furioso* are only few among many that aim to emphasise Marino's points. As the *Furioso* is referenced quite rarely, Ariosto's poem seems to be a pretext for Marino to discuss matters of a very different nature. While this is partly true, the references he does make to the *Furioso* are nonetheless significant in terms of the adaptation mechanisms underpinning his approach to Ariosto.

Marino's relationship with the work he claims to counterattack is not as straightforward as his purpose seems to imply. Marino reuses the *Furioso* at various levels, as an object of opposition, a poetic and textual source and a source for religious exegesis. If, on the one hand, he unambiguously rejects and criticises the romance aspects of Ariosto's poem, on the other he explicitly reprises and reinterprets some of Ariosto's episodes to further his own discourse, which is the expression of a cultural horizon very distant from that of the Ferrarese poet. The *Furioso spirituale* substitutes the *Furioso*'s romance and epic narrative with a sermonising religious discourse characterised by a

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<sup>460</sup> Marino, *Furioso spirituale*, A3<sup>v</sup>.

variety of references aiming to illustrate points of doctrine. Unlike previous rewritings such as Scanello's and Croce's, in fact, Ariosto's narrative is not replaced by another centred around a single episode, action or event.

### 13.3 Ariosto rejected?

It is not only in the letter to the dedicatee that the condemnation of Ariosto's poem appears conspicuous. Marino's rejection of the *Furioso*'s cultural horizon is made evident from the beginning of his poem which conventionally recalls Ariosto:

Non donne o cavalieri, non armi o amore  
non cortesie, n' audaci imprese io canto  
che vanno in preda al pazzo rio furore  
de la carne mortal, misera tanto.  
Ma canto donne e cavalier che fuore  
son dal suo intrico in pregio tal tal [sic] vanto,  
ch'è forza a l'estro mio (se mi lo accenna  
l'alto signor) che gl'impenniam la penna.

*Fs* I 1

In a direct confrontation with the source, Marino states that his subject is not the arms and loves of ladies and knights but the lives and deeds of women and men who are outside the world's maze. According to him, madness characterises all Ariosto's characters and derives from their flawed human condition. Similarly to the rewriting of Goro and Scanello, chivalric characters are censored and replaced by heroes of a religious nature who befit the author's purpose. The frenzy of Orlando, consequently, is re-interpreted in a moral way so that Ariosto's chivalric work becomes a symbol of the profane and carnal dimension and is then to be completely subverted. Later in canto I Marino reiterates that he does not deal with the profane love of Orlando for Angelica but with divine love:

[...]  
Canto un nuovo duello, armi et amore,  
non cantao [sic] già mai per altro colle.  
La bella sposa io canto per cui more  
Dio per amor, non come Orlando il folle,  
ma con più eccesso in su la croce in alto  
da far pietoso un cor fatto di smalto.

*Fs* I 74

While Marino evokes Ariosto's declaration of novelty (*Of* I, 2), Orlando's love for Angelica is contrasted with God's love for the Church, his spouse: divine love, and not

Orlando's mad desire for a woman, is a subject worthy of being sung. The definition of the subject as 'un nuovo duello, armi et amore' implies the intent, from Marino's part, of rejecting Ariosto's ideological framework as well as of following in his footsteps. Rather than being fully other from the *Furioso*, the *Furioso spirituale* is indeed still a poem of arms and love.

That Marino does not completely reject but rather appropriates Ariosto is evident from the fact that in his sermonising discourse Ariosto's titular hero provides an example of the human condition split between spirit and flesh:

La carne e spirto nostro son quel nodo  
d'Orlando, e Rodomonte, i quali sonno  
costretti a lotta, in tal maniera e modo,  
che non si ponno spartir come vonno:  
è pazzo l'un di senno, l'altro è sodo,  
ma sono avvolti insieme il più che ponno,  
tanto che caderan dal ponte al fondo  
con lor percossa grave e con gran pondo.

La carne è pazza, è figliola de l'ira,  
lo spirto è saggio, ma luttando ogn'ora  
sopra 'l ponte mondan faran la gira,  
dopo ne caderan così elli ancora.  
Però non t'intricar, però ben mira  
la sua pazzia, e lo intrico vadi fora;  
che se in amor con lei ti vai intricando,  
farai la lotta come fece Orlando.

*Fs* XI, 46-47

Marino draws a parallel between Orlando, the hero entangled in the 'amorosa pania' (*Of* XXIV, 1, 1), and Rodomonte, the villain condemned to hell, for their attachment to the world. The error the two characters share is the subjection to human weaknesses such as love and ire, for which they are both punished by God. More particularly, Orlando becomes the symbol of the fight between spirit and flesh and his story therefore turns into a cautionary tale of the consequences deriving from succumbing to the latter. Making Orlando the symbol of the battle between flesh and spirit, profane and religious, mundane and divine, implies the recognition of Ariosto's narrative in positive terms and shows that Marino does not effectively renounce Ariosto's hero but inherently accepts his story as valuable in didactic terms. A more complex interpretation of Orlando is evident in another passage, in which the paladin is proclaimed together with Mars as inferior to Jesus, who surpasses any hero because of his eternal nature, implying that the main flaw of Orlando is his mortality: 'io ho visto cavalier, ma così forte | come costui nessuno fu, né Orlando

né Marte | perchè [...] al fin poi l'arte | gli venne meno, poi ch'a ogn'un la morte | gli de' alfin morte' (*Fs* V, 18). Far from being simply indicated as an example of immorality, the character of Orlando is adapted to Marino's discourse revealing a layered reinterpretation of the *Furioso's* protagonist. Thus, the romance figure of Orlando is incorporated as functional to Marino's alien discourse; as will be seen in the following sections, this is the main dynamics grounding Marino's appropriation of Ariosto's characters and episodes.

### 13.4 *Orlando furioso* as symbol of the carnal dimension

The identification between the secular dimension and the world of the *Furioso*, which is the main reason for its condemnation, is a recurring theme in Marino's poem. However, such identification is not unequivocal. In canto X, Marino includes references to three episodes of the romance in a series of comparisons aiming to explicate the nature of the material world as a false idea. In order to unmask the vanity of the world, Marino compares it to a comedy, the statue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (a biblical element also reprised by Dante in *Inf.* XIV, 103-111), the peacock, and, more importantly, Agramante's dilemma in *Of* XXVII, the tale of the king of Pavia from *Of* XXVIII and Orrilo from *Of* XIV:

Il mondo è quello intrico di Agramante,  
che avendo havuto l'impresa sua vinto,  
si avince, e lega 'n lui con leghe tante  
che non sa sciorsi al cieco laberinto;  
quando che Rodamonte si fè inante,  
e contra Mandricardo d'arme cinto  
chiese la pugna con la man'oltrice  
dicendo sua l'amata Doralice.

[...]

Il mondo è quella favola ch'innanti  
al re di Sarza raccontò l'hostiero:  
dove Giocondo il più bell'huom di quanti  
veduto avesse mai un occhio cerviero  
restò poi tante ciance e finti pianti  
frodato da la moglie; è quell'altiero  
re Astolfo, così bel che la Regina  
pur froda ancor con sua total roina.

E mentre l'uno e l'altro si conforta  
pigliarne una comun, per far che sia  
guardata ben nel letto l'empia scorta  
diventa a mezzo lor così ancor ria.  
Fuggite adunque il mondo, perch'importa,



quanto ch'importa ogni altro mal per via,  
perchè se non fuggite è ben che note  
vi sien le frodi sue, con le man vote.

[...]

Il mondo è quello Orilo, cui non puote  
ferro smembrar che poi non si raggiugna,  
e quanto più si taglia e si percote,  
tanto più volontier corre a la pugna;  
ma se dal busto il capo altier si scote  
e da lui il crine fatal si disgiugna,  
alhora è morto: così è il mondo a prova  
se non si lascia in tutto, poco giova.

*Fs X*, 64, 67-68, 85

The world is likened to the intricate events narrated in *Of XXVII*, where the Saracen camp is affected by several internal conflicts: Rodomonte fights with Mandricardo for Doralice; Ruggiero with Mandricardo for the Roman eagle emblem; Rodomonte with Ruggiero and Sacripante for the horse Frontino; Marfisa with Mandricardo because of his attempt to give her to Rodomonte; Gradasso with Mandricardo for the possession of Orlando's sword, Durlindana; and Marfisa with the thief Brunello for his theft of her sword. Caused by Discordia and Superbia as per divine command, (*Of XXVII*, 100) all these conflicts are recalled by Marino in three stanzas (*Fs X*, 64-66). The definition of such intricate events as Agramante's 'intrico' comes from Ariosto, who uses *intricare* in reference to the complicated situation ('per più *intricarla* il Tartaro viene anche' *Of XXVII*, 43, 1) and later writes that 'resta Agramante in tal confusione | di questi *intrichi*, che non vede come | poterli sciorre' (*Of XXVII*, 94, 5-7).<sup>461</sup>

Moreover, the world, as Marino says, is similar to the tale about women's untrustworthiness told by the innkeeper to the scorned Rodomonte in canto XXVIII. The tale of Astolfo king of Pavia reveals women's unfaithful nature. A handsome king proud of his comeliness, Astolfo wishes to meet the only other man who can compete with him in attractiveness. Invited to the king's court, Giocondo leaves his house but discovers his wife's betrayal. Devastated, he arrives at court where he discovers that the queen is betraying her husband with a dwarf. The discovery relieves his spirit and he informs the king of his wife's affair after making him swear he would not harm her. Giocondo and Astolfo then leave to find out whether all women are as unfaithful as their wives. After verifying that for women one lover is not enough, they choose a girl they can both enjoy

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<sup>461</sup> In canto XXX Ariosto also uses the image of the knot: 's'affatica Agramante, nè disciorre, | nè Marsilio con lui sa questo intrico' (*Of XXX* 19, 1-2).

without risk. However, the girl, named Fiammetta, is in love with Greco, an errand boy who manages to trick them and spend a night with her; when discovered, they are eventually allowed to marry by Giocondo and Astolfo, who return to their wives after the confirmation that they are no worse than any other woman (*Of* XXVIII, 4-73).

These three episodes already have a negative connotation in the *Furioso*: the intricate disputes among the Saracens are caused by Discordia, sent by the archangel Michael; the story of the king of Pavia is disowned by Ariosto himself, who compares it to ‘fintioni e fole’ (*Of* XXVIII, 3, 4); and Orrilo is a monster preying on humans. Thus, Ariosto’s negative judgement in fact underpins Marino’s appropriation of these episodes and is adapted to his religious discourse.

### 13.5 The *Furioso*’s characters and episodes as exemplary

Conventional allegorical or moralising reading often determines references to characters and situations from the *Furioso*. In canto IV, in which Marino praises the virtue of virginity, the chaste Isabella is mentioned as an example due to her tricking Rodomonte in order to maintain her vow of faithfulness to Zerbino’s memory (*Fs* IV 54). Moreover, consistently with the traditional interpretation of the episode of Alcina, in canto VI Alcina and Logistilla are mentioned as the symbols of the mortal dimension and the blessed one respectively (*Fs* VI, 138).

More often, however, Marino gives a more freestanding allegorical interpretation of the *Furioso*’s episodes. In canto X he combines two references to the *Furioso*, namely to the murderous women led by Orontea who enslave or kill all the men who happen to enter their land (*Of* XX, 10-97) and to the monster represented on one of Merlin’s fountains (*Of* XXVI, 31-36):

Astolfo paladin, cui gratie tante  
nel corno ti si dier, tu sei possente.  
La città mia Ditea,<sup>462</sup> far, che si spiante  
su un tanto gridar tuo da lei si sente;  
perché tu essendo cavallier errante,  
non ti dei mai fermar, se così spenta  
non sia Orontea et Artemia, il mondo matto  
ch’è d’ogni viriltà nemico affatto.

Questo è quel mostro di Merlin, che tiene  
le branche di leon, di lupo il capo;  
che con li denti soi rodendo viene,

<sup>462</sup> Marino cites Ditea, the city of origin of the murderous women, and not Alessandretta, the city they founded after leaving their homeland.

e divorando ogn'un da piede a capo;  
il resto è volpe perchè gli convene  
che fraudolamente sia, ma se ben capo  
l'orecchie ha d'asinel; però dir parme  
correte tutti meco a prender l'arme.

*Fs X*, 7-8

In *Orlando furioso*, in order to save Guidon Selvaggio and his companions, Astolfo blows his magical horn and thus disperses the terrified women (along with his own company). In the case of Merlin's monster, Marino echoes its description also textually ('le branche di leon' reprises 'branche avea di leon', 'il resto è volpe' 'l'altro che resta, | tutto era volpe' *Of XXVI*, 31).

Marino interprets these episodes as representative of the madness of the world, which should be dispelled like Astolfo disperses the murderous women and fought like Merlin's monster. Significantly, Marino makes individual references to the animal parts of the beast, which have specific allegorical meanings ('il resto è *volpe* perchè gli conviene | che *fraudelentemente* sia'). Whereas in Ariosto the monster is an allegory of political as well as moral nature alluding to contemporary events, in Marino it assumes a generic allegorical meaning of moral, rather than political, significance. Notably, an allegorical monster that recalls Ariosto's likewise features in Scanello's rewriting, where it takes on a new meaning fitting the author's religious narrative, as discussed in 5.7

In the same canto Marino evokes also Ruggiero's captivity at the hands of Atlante: 'statti nel mondo e sei sempre infelice, | fra mille inganni soi, fra mille torti | et io in Atlante piango te'n Roggiero, | che ne l'incanto suo sei morto vero' (*Fs X* 46). If in *Orlando furioso* Atlante's purpose is to save Ruggiero from his fatal destiny, in Marino it is the paladin's captivity, a deceitful illusion like the carnal world, which is equated with death. Marino's reinterpretation of Ariosto's episode is consistent with its traditional allegorical reading: according to Toscanella, for instance, Atlante symbolises Love, who deceits and entraps lovers.<sup>463</sup> However, since profane love is rejected by Marino, as is discussed in the following section, the negativity of Atlante's allegory is reinforced and adapted to the new narrative. Thus, within his religious discourse, the episodes of the *Furioso* are re-proposed as exemplary. Rather than effacing Ariosto's characters and episodes, Marino uses allegory to adapt them to his argument, implicitly attributing didactic value to Ariosto's romance and showing that its didactic potential is the premise underpinning his act of rewriting.

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<sup>463</sup> Toscanella, A1<sup>r</sup>.

### 13.6 The condemnation of profane love

The main theme of the *Furioso spirituale* is the condemnation of the wordly dimension, with which *Orlando furioso* is identified. Marino, then, is particularly concerned with the issues of love and sexuality, especially with regard to women. As divine spiritual love is superior to its carnal counterpart, the erotic dimension of Ariosto's episodes is to be removed. This is evident from Marino's rewriting of Sacripante's lament, one of the very rare instances of *Orlando furioso* used as a textual model. Dealing with the power of divine love and original sin, Marino describes Eve's grief after her banishment from heaven by evoking Sacripante's lament (*Of* I, 40-41) in canto II:

Si stette il giorno tutto a capo basso,  
dogliosa tutta 'n se, e tutta iscontente,  
la donna, che ne va sì afflito, e lasso,  
per lamentarsi, e così amaramente,  
ch'avrebbe al caso suo spezzato un sasso,  
una tigre crudel fatta clemente;  
sospirando parean gli occhi suoi fiume,  
il petto, un Mongibel, ch'ogn'hor fà lume.

Dolor (dicea) crudel, ch'il cor tu m'ardi,  
ch'il cor mi rodi intier con la tua lima,  
che debbo far, se fra leon, fra pardi,  
nanzi, che fatta ahimè, son gionta prima?  
A pena ho visto in Dio li primi sguardi,  
chi dei al Demon di me la *spoglia* prima,  
quando alzai la mano all'empia fronde,  
mi viddi aimè cader tutta ne l'onde.

*Fs* II, 85-86

Pensoso più d'un'ora a capo basso  
stette, Signore, il cavallier dolente;  
poi cominciò con suono afflito e lasso  
a lamentarsi sì soavemente,  
ch'avrebbe di pietà spezzato un sasso,  
una tigre crudel fatta clemente.  
Sospirante piangea, tal ch'un ruscello  
parean le guance, e 'l petto un Mongibello.

– Pensier (dicea) che 'l cor m'agghiacci ed  
ardi,  
e causi il duol che sempre il rode e lima,  
che debbo far, poi ch'io son giunto tardi,  
e ch'altri a corre il frutto è andato prima?  
a pena avuto io n'ho parole e sguardi,  
ed altri n'ha tutta la *spoglia* opima.  
Se non ne tocca a me frutto né fiore,  
perché affligger per lei mi vuo' più il core?

*Of* I, 40-41

In the *Furioso*, Sacripante laments the supposed loss of virginity of the fugitive princess, albeit eventually restating his resolution to continue loving her. Marino reuses Ariosto's text in a context that excludes the erotic significance of the source but maintains that of a lament caused by a loss, given that Eve laments her banishment from heaven and thus the loss of the edenic condition. Within Marino's religious horizon the element of the 'spoglia', the female body as object of male possession, refers to the human body as constitutively prone to sin. Significantly, Sacripante's lament is evoked also in another passage rewriting the famous comparison of the rose to underline the values of virginity and purity:

La verginella è simile ala [sic] rosa  
 ch'in un giardin bel, ch'in una spina  
 mentre sola e sicura si riposa,  
 ogn'un la va adorando, ogn'un la inchina.  
 a se nel tocco si fa sospettosa  
 o pur la mente in fatto tal declina,  
 né greggia né pastor, bifulco o fera  
 più la vorrà sì difettosa e nera?

*Fs IV, 46*

In both cases the erotic dimension is censored and allegorised by Marino's religious discourse. Compared with Ariosto, in which the woman is loved only by the one who deflowers her, in Marino the simple inclination towards sexual desire ('pur la mente in tal fatto declina') is enough to blacken her ('sì difettosa e nera') and make her undesirable to all. Notably, Sacripante's lament is also censored and rewritten by Scanello, in which it is similarly associated with the Fall, as discussed in 5.8.

Marino also makes references to the *Furioso* to further his own arguments about the superiority of divine love and to illustrate Catholic sexual morals. He is against procreation unless for the sake of avoiding the extinction of mankind and, to elucidate this point, makes use of Ariosto's episode of the tyrant Marganorre (*Of XXXVII, 38-121*):

Condenna [sic] l'Ariosto il Marganorre  
 quando le donne sue da l'uom divide,  
 perchè Marfisa e Rugier ne va a torre  
 con Bradamante le sue fatte infide;  
 così a Giason con gli argonauti occorre  
 in Lenno far, ch'ognun di lor si ride.  
 Io se no'l lodo direi pure in Christo,  
 che saria ben, per far più grande acquisto.

Quei nostri primi padri antiqui, quando  
 viddero morto Abel, che già fu 'l primo  
 che cominciò fra noi gir sospirando,  
 convinto a morte dal crudel Caimo,  
 si ritiraron d'andar procreando  
 più figli al mondo infame, al mondo infimo  
 ma per lo geno uman non venir meno  
 fu forz'aimè tornar col ventre pieno.

*Fs IV, 76-77*

In the *Furioso*, the cruel Marganorre establishes the separation of men and women and the exile of the latter to a village on the outskirts of his reign, and rules that any woman who ventures into his realm is to be killed if she is with armed escorts, and punished

otherwise. Marino connects this episode to the mythological women of Lemnos, who welcomed Jason and his companions, mated with them and eventually exterminated all men on the island. Notably, Marino's judgement of Marganorre ('Io se no'l lodo direi pure in Christo, | che saria ben per far più grande acquisto') directly opposes Ariosto's and represents the tyrant in a positive light for separating men and women, and thus preventing sexual activity, in order to further underline the importance of abstinence. However, Marino eventually acknowledges the necessity of sexual intercourse for procreation to avoid the extinction of the human race, thus reinforcing the Catholic doctrine of sexual activity for the sole purpose of procreation. Thus, Marino appropriates the *Furioso*'s episode of Marganorre to the point of taking over Ariosto's judgement and subverting it. He adapts the romance episode to his narrative by choosing to focus on the issue of the separation of genders, as the association with the myth of Lemnos indicates, and by reversing the traditional condemnation of Marganorre and his actions against women.<sup>464</sup>

Within such anti-erotic discourse, moreover, Marino gives a series of examples that includes female characters from the *Furioso*. Beside the aforementioned Isabella, Marino mentions the beautiful queen of Iceland, Lidia, and Bradamante, albeit for different reasons. In the *Furioso*, in order to choose her husband, the queen of Iceland asks Charlemagne to give a golden shield to the most valorous of his knights, whom she will accept as spouse (*Of* XXXII, 56-58). Similarly, Bradamante does not accept any other husband but Ruggiero because of his superior valour; it is noteworthy that Ariosto praises her as 'degnà d'eterna laude' for choosing Ruggiero (*Of* XXVI, 2, 1). Both, Marino argues, are in error as no one is worthier of love than God, who is eternal (*Fs* IV, 91-93, 95). Their actions are represented as misdirected, as they look for superior valour and virtue in the mundane dimension rather than in the divine one.

While Bradamante and the queen are recalled for choosing, or seeking to choose, the most valorous husband, Lidia is reprimanded for rejecting her suitor:

Ma in Lidia sconoscente al fido Amante,  
 quante miserie l'Oriosto [sic] sente?  
 L'istesso sentirete volte tante  
 voi, che lasciate sposo sì eccellente.  
 E se nel corno su 'l caval volante  
 fa ciò palese Astolfo, che non mente,  
 diate, vi priego, al violator mio fede,  
 che grid ogn'hor beato l'huom che 'l crede.

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<sup>464</sup> Varisco 1568, Bb7v; De Franceschi 1584 c7r.

Unlike them, Lidia unambiguously figures as a negative example. She recounts her story to Astolfo when he meets her in hell: though devotedly loved by Alceste, she relentlessly rejected him and for her ungratefulness is punished there. Not only does Marino acknowledge and espouse Ariosto's condemnation of Lidia, who was interpreted as an example of women's ungratefulness,<sup>465</sup> but he extends it to those who reject the love of God, 'sposo sì eccellente'. Moreover, in support of his argument he mentions Astolfo as a symbol of truthfulness ('che non mente'). The episode of Lidia is then reinterpreted as representing the consequences of rejecting divine love. Thus, while criticised, the queen of Iceland, Bradamante and Lidia are accepted as examples to elucidate Marino's points. Moreover, as Ariosto's episodes become exemplary and are assimilated within his argumentation, Marino's divine dimension incorporates the profane erotic dimension of the *Furioso*.

### 13.7 From romance episode to parable

It is clear from the examples discussed so far that Marino makes use of the *Furioso* to advance his own arguments rather than simply opposing its narrative. However, he sometimes goes further, as in his sermonising discourse Ariosto's romance also provides materials for the clarification of specific doctrinal tenets. In canto III, discussing the theme of the incarnation of Christ, Marino refers to the episodes of Norandino and Grifone:

Perché non si potea capire a punto  
il suo parlar, n' il suo vedere alquanto,  
se a noi scendeva in così alto assunto  
ne la sua gloria incomprensibil tanto,  
però fu necessario esser là giunto,  
de la natura tua a pigliare il manto,  
perché sia inteso in voci umili e piane,  
senza distempro de le cose umane.

E Norandino Re de la Soria,  
vestito d'una pelle a l'antro bieco  
de l'orco, fra le mandrie sue non gia  
per liberar Lucina da quel speco?  
E pur Grifon sotto la insegna ria  
del vil Martano ancor non reca seco  
il primo onore? In che Dio s'addita  
che sotto l'arme altrui dà a noi la vita.

<sup>465</sup> Varisco 1568, Aa1<sup>v</sup>; Toscanella writes that 'Lidia è lo essemplio d'ingratitude' (Toscanella, A2<sup>r</sup>).

Addressing the theme of Christ's reincarnation and sacrifice, Marino focuses in particular on the issue of the double nature of Jesus, who made himself human ('de la natura tua pigliare il manto') to make his message comprehensible to men. Through the images of the mantle and disguise, Marino connects Jesus' reincarnation to Norandino's attempted rescue of Lucina and to Grifone's having to don Martano's arms in order to save his own life.

The stories of Norandino and Grifone, mentioned together by Marino, are interlaced in the *Furioso* (*Of* XXVII 25-135). Lucina, wife of the king of Syria Norandino, is kidnapped by a blind ogre, who feeds only on men while keeping the women captive in a cavern and is characterised by an infallible sense of smell. Norandino attempts to rescue Lucina with the help of the monster's wife, who provides him with animal hides to deceive her husband's nose. Thus, the king of Syria manages to see Lucina even though she is eventually saved by Mandricardo and Gradasso. The story of Norandino intertwines with Grifone's as the latter participates in the joust the king of Syria organises in celebration of the happy ending of his misadventure with the ogre. In love with the wicked Orrigille, Grifone is deceived by her and her lover Martano, who poses as her brother. At Norandino's joust, Martano dishonours himself by fleeing and Grifone is the final winner. While Grifone, exhausted, is deep in sleep, Martano and Orrigille steal his armour in order to present Martano as the winner of the joust to Norandino, who does not know Grifone's face. Grifone then chases and tracks down the two traitors while wearing Martano's armour, so when Norandino sees him, he mistakes him for the craven knight and orders that he be publically shamed.

Though in different circumstances, both Grifone and Norandino find themselves in the situation of having to conceal their identity under false pretences. However, even if disguised, the identities of Ariosto's heroes are unchanged just as the divine nature of Jesus is unchanged in his mortal body. Marino uses the stories of Grifone and Norandino as narrative elements through which he can illustrate and clarify complex theological points such as the human and divine nature of Jesus. Through reinterpretation and adaptation, Ariosto's episodes are employed as tales that express an abstract religious argument through a concrete narrative easily understandable to the reader, thus acting as almost parables: the narrative of the *Furioso* is then equated to the Scriptures rather than disproved or removed.



### 13.8 Allegorical catalysts: Astolfo, the moon, and his journey

As the analysis of a number of Marino's passages has revealed, allegory is a crucial mechanism that underpins his rewriting. As seen in 4.3, allegorical and moralised reading served to legitimise literary works as well as neutralise their subversive potential. Moreover, as allegory is associated with different, concealed, meanings, it cannot be limited to one meaning but continues to unfold.<sup>466</sup> From this perspective, one episode of the *Furioso* is particularly deserving of critical attention, not only due to its presence in more passages of Marino's rewriting than any other, but also because it takes on a different significance in each of them. Marino refers to Astolfo's journey to rescue Orlando's wit in at least three instances. In canto I he mentions Astolfo on the moon among other examples of the errors of poets; in canto IV he refers more specifically to the retrieval of Orlando's wit; and in canto XIII to Astolfo's discoveries on the moon. Thus, Marino makes references to different aspects of the paladin's travel and incorporates Ariosto's narrative within his argumentative strategies through different viewpoints.

In canto I Marino criticises traditional profane poetry and popular beliefs as sterile, because they originate from a wordly dimension. He gives a series of examples that includes the catalogue of the objects Astolfo finds on the moon and the miraculous magic performed after his journey:

Anzi a Astolfo le *vessiche vane*  
saran, con gli *hami d'or*, *lacci e cathene*,  
*tra le girlande ascosti*; e son le *'nsane*  
*minestre* vote, che qua giù van piene;  
son di quei *serpi* pur la copia immane,  
ch'ognun di *donna finta faccia* tiene.  
E sono i *vischi*, i *mantici* e le *bocche*,  
che ne van *rotte*, senza chi le tocche.

E son quei *velli d'or*, di lino e lana,  
di seta e di cotton, ch'ognor rimena  
col dito al fuso suo la *vecchia cana*,  
con gaudio prima dar, con poi dar pena;  
saran gli artigli 'n fogia nova e strana  
del' *aguila*, che mai si tiene perpiena;  
son le *roine di città e castella*,  
che van sozzopra in questa parte e 'n quella.

Sono quei lauri, cedri, olive e palme,

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<sup>466</sup> Jeremy Tambling, *Allegory* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 61.

quell'herbe, foglie, frondi, fiori e frutti,  
 ch'Astolfo pur con ambedue le palme,  
 se butta in mar veran navigli tutti.  
 Che belle poesie? Felici et alme?  
 Che honorati progressi? E che costrutti?  
 Sono i sepolcri d'or di fuora e d'entro  
 saran le puzzerie, che vanno al centro.

Son le stagion de' paladini,  
 l'arme 'ncantate e le superstitioni,  
 che l'Oriosto [sic] aimhè come divini  
 va reputando, e saran gran demoni.  
 Misera poesia, crudeli 'nchini  
 son quest'inchini d'huomini non boni,  
 quando se nel principio, suono e canto  
 cantando van, nel fin rimane 'l pianto?

*Fs* I, 93-96

Denouncing profane poetry as deceptive fiction, Marino gives as an example a catalogue of the allegorical objects found on the moon: the 'vessiche vane' are the 'tumide vesiche' (*Of* XXXIV, 76), 'hami d'or' evokes the 'ami d'oro e d'argento' (*Of* XXXIV, 77, 1), the 'lacci tra le ghirlande [...] ascosti' are Ariosto's 'in ghirlande ascosi lacci' (*Of* XXXIV 77, 5), the 'catene' allude to 'nodi d'oro' and 'gemmati ceppi' (*Of* XXXIV, 78, 1), the 'minestre vote' refers to 'di versate minestre una gran massa' (*Of* XXXIV, 80, 1), the 'serpi [...] Ch'ognun di donna finta faccia tiene' are Ariosto's 'serpi con faccia di donzella' (*Of* XXIV 79, 5), 'i vischi' recalls 'gran copia di panie con visco' (*Of* XXXIV 81, 1), 'manticì' refers to 'i manticì ch'intorno han pieni i greppi' (*Of* XXXIV, 78, 5), 'le bocche | che ne van rotte' are Ariosto's 'boccie rotte di più sorti' (*Of* XXIV, 79, 7), 'gli artigli [...] | del'Aquila' are 'd'acquile artigli' (*Of* XXXIV, 78, 3), and 'le roine di città e castella' is a citation of 'ruine di cittadi e di castella' (*Of* XXXIV, 79, 1).<sup>467</sup>

All these objects have a specific allegorical meaning that is explained by Ariosto (*Of* XXXIV, 76-81). Since in Marino's discourse this catalogue of items allegorically symbolises profane poetry, the items are not necessarily listed according to the allegorical meaning attached by Ariosto. Moreover, Marino changes a few elements, namely the bladders, which are described as empty, and the pottages, described as full on the earth and empty on the moon, contrary to Ariosto's text. As a result, the meaning of this passage is rather obscure. On the one hand, Marino appears to be referring to Ariosto's entire narrative of the episode on the moon, with the intention of condemning it among other

<sup>467</sup> Besides this, Marino refers to the image of the Parcae: 'la vecchia cana' is an almost literal quotation of Ariosto's 'una femina cana' (*Of* XXXIV, 88, 4) referring to the Parca spinning the thread of human lives.

negative examples as false and misleading. On the other, he may be referring to the episode as symbolising the soul which rises above and realises the vanity of the world, in accordance with the traditional interpretation of Astolfo's travel to the moon.<sup>468</sup>

Furthermore, in this passage Marino refers to an episode that takes place after the paladin's mission. In canto XXXIX of the *Furioso*, during the conflict at Biserta, Astolfo throws fronds into the sea, which miraculously turn into ships:

Et avendosi piene ambe le palme,  
quanto potea capir, di varie fronde  
a lauri, a cedri tolte, a olive, a palme,  
venne sul mare, e le gittò ne l'onde.  
Oh felici, e dal Ciel ben dilette alme!  
Grazia che Dio raro a' mortali infonde!  
Oh stupendo miracolo che nacque  
di quelle frondi, come fur ne l'acque!

Crebbero in quantità fuor d'ogni stima;  
si feron curve e grosse e lunghe e gravi;  
[...]

Miracol fu veder le fronde sparte  
produr fuste, galee, navi da gabbia.  
[...]

*Of XXXIX, 26-28*

In stanza 95 of Canto I, Marino clearly evokes Ariosto's words ('quei lauri, cedri, olive e palme, | Quell'herbe, foglie, frondi, fiori e frutti' and 'ambedue le palme' quote Ariosto's 'di varie fronde | a lauri, a cedri tolte, a olive, a palme' and 'ambe le palme' respectively). The magical transformation of fronds into ships, which is described as a divine miracle in the *Furioso*, is condemned by Marino as a further example of the nefarious nature of poetry, which is significantly compared to a golden coffin hiding a foul-smelling corpse. More importantly, Marino condemns Astolfo's magical enterprise precisely because Ariosto defines it as miraculous, as the following stanza clarifies. His criticism of Ariosto is not only due to the profane subject of his poetry, defined as superstition, but also to the fact that this transformation is represented as divine when it is actually demonic.

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<sup>468</sup> In Valvassori 1553 the significance of Astolfo's travel is thus explained: 'Che il venerabile Giovanni si fa incontro ad Astolfo nel Paradiso terrestre e lo mena nel cerchio della Luna, dove gli mostra in un vallone tutto quel che qui giù si perde, significa che, quando l'animo dimora in tranquillità, con la grazia di Dio tanto s'inalza che si ravede come indarno si va dietro alle cose del mondo, le quali tutte nel vero non sono altro che vanità.' AA6<sup>v</sup>. In his *Bellezze del Furioso* (1574), Toscanella writes that 'Astolfo si prende per l'uomo contemplativo, che con l'ingegno penetra fino l'inferno, et il Cielo, non che la terra' (Toscanella, A1<sup>v</sup>). It is noteworthy that Astolfo is also defined by Toscanella as fortunate due to the magical means Ariosto puts at his disposal.

Significantly, this passage was scrutinised by Catholic censor Tommaso Galletti for similar reasons.<sup>469</sup> In his censorship of the romance, Galletti deems the miracle of Astolfo's branches turning into ships unacceptable precisely because the concept of miracle is applied to a profane story, a fiction.<sup>470</sup> This passage was clearly a particularly problematic one from a Catholic revisionist perspective. For Marino, then, *Orlando furioso* is dangerous not simply because it distracts and captures its readers within its profane, worldly dimension, but also because it encourages them to believe that its superstition is religiously canonical. Taking into account Galletti's censorship, moreover, reveals the variety of censorial approaches to the romance, as elements censored or harshly criticised by Galletti feature in Marino's work. One such example is the sorceress Alcina, whom Galletti considers a witch and therefore a dangerous element that could reinforce the reader's superstitions about witches and their power. On the other hand, as previously mentioned, Marino espouses the traditional allegorical interpretation of Alcina and adapts it to his argument.<sup>471</sup>

The other references to the episode of Astolfo's journey to restore Orlando's sanity provide substantial evidence of the complex relationship between Marino and Ariosto. In canto IV, Marino significantly refers to the vial containing Orlando's wits in relation to his own poem:

Il prete Yanni cieco e d'arpie afflito,  
Orlando par [sic] amor sì inetto e matto,  
che l'un riceve la vista col vitto  
e l'altro savio dal baron vien fatto,  
ti segnano [sic], lettor, che'è derelitto  
di senno 'l mondo cieco; e sarà a fatto  
di fame oppresso, se dal ciel non pigli  
l'ampolla piena mia d'alti consigli.

*Fs* IV, 94

Marino associates the story of Orlando with that of Prester John, both connected to Astolfo's otherworldly travels. At the beginning of his journey, Astolfo meets the Ethiopian Emperor Senapo, also known as Prester John, who grew arrogant and defied God by attempting to conquer the earthly paradise. Defeated, he was then made blind and doomed to be tormented by hunger, since God sent the infernal harpies to perpetually steal and soil his food as punishment, until, according to a prophecy, a knight would appear riding a winged horse. Riding the hippogriff, Astolfo fulfils the prophecy by

<sup>469</sup> On Galletti's censorship see 4.3.

<sup>470</sup> Helm, *Poetry and censorship*, pp. 71-73.

<sup>471</sup> On Galletti's censorship of Alcina I refer to Helm, *Poetry and Censorship*, pp. 79-81.

warding off the harpies and sending them back to hell by means of his magical horn (*Of* XXXIII, 102-128). Marino mentions Orlando and Senapo as examples of the moral crisis and destiny of the world: Orlando's love-madness and Prester John's blindness and torment epitomise the world's condition of madness and blindness, and only an intervention such as that of Astolfo can grant redemption. Orlando and Prester John are associated on the basis that they are both punished by God for their errors and saved by Astolfo. Marino's interpretation of Senapo's predicament in religious terms is not isolated: according to Ruscelli,

nella persona del Senapo, o Prete Gianni, Imperator dell'Ethiopia, posta dall'Autore a somoglianza non tanto del favoloso Fineo, quanto dell'istoria di Nembrotte, che si ha nelle sacre lettere, si ricorda sì come le più volte le estreme ricchezze, et felicità, traggono le persone sì fattamente dal timore, et dalla riverenza di Dio sommo, che ardiscono di concorrere, et combatter seco, et questo fanno col suppeditar la giustitia, la clementia la carità, e la verità, che sono una cosa con Dio stesso. Et essendo questo medesimo esempio stato accennato dai poeti gentili sotto la favola dei Giganti, che sopra posero monti a monti per far guerra a Dio, i quai da Giove furono fulminati, et distrutti affatto, l'Autor nostro ha in questo suo havuto dignissima consideratione alla convenevolezza della clementia di Dio vero, in lasciare il Senapo col merito della fede, et religion Cristiana, spatio di penitenza, et mandarli poi, come da cielo, insperato e per corso ordinario della natura, sopr'umano soccorso.<sup>472</sup>

As noted by Cristina Acucella, Ruscelli's paratext aims at highlighting the superiority of the Christian God as well as that of the *Furioso* as a Christian poem.<sup>473</sup> Thus, while Marino interprets Ariosto's characters in moralising and allegorical terms as was common at the time, such a reinterpretation is inherently connected to the Sicilian priest's own rewriting, which is significantly compared to the vial of Orlando's wits recovered by Astolfo. In so doing, Marino implicitly accepts Ariosto's narrative, which takes on a positive value. Characters and episodes are not simply charged with a didactic significance effectively integrated into his sermon: Marino actively appropriates the theme of madness, which is the core issue in the *Furioso*, and adapts it to his religious discourse to the point that it is identified with it.

The third passage referring to the episode of Astolfo on the moon provides a positive reinterpretation of said episode from yet another perspective. In canto XIII, discussing the difficulty of being worthy of heaven, Marino mentions Ariosto's personification of Time:

L'Ariosto dirà de' velli, i quali

<sup>472</sup> De Franceschi 1584, a1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>473</sup> Cristina Acucella, 'Le perfettioni di un autor profano': Ruscelli e le allegorie dell'edizione Valgrisi (1556) del *Furioso*, in *Le sorti d'Orlando: illustrazioni e riscritture del Furioso*, ed. Daniela Caracciolo, Massimiliano Rossi (Lucca: Pacini Fazzi, 2013), pp. 55-73 (67-68).

avean descritti i nomi là d'ogn'uno;  
come quel vecchio, che pareva con l'ali,  
tutti affondaro al fiume oscuro e bruno;  
dove dice l'Author de' nostri mali,  
parole, che faran tremar ciascuno,  
quando di cento milia, che l'arena  
rivolve al fondo, un sol ne serva a pena.

Perché son pochi che vanno nel cielo,  
perchè son pochi senz'inganno e dolo;  
e saran pochi, a chi fa Dio revelo,  
essendo poco il merto, e poco il volo  
de le cose celesti; anzi io revelo  
che però il cielo è abbandonato e solo,  
perchè s'han dato tutti a ber ne l'onde  
di così fatte lor mondane sponde.

*Fs XIII, 96-97*

In Ariosto's narrative, the old man personifying Time throws the plates with the names of the deceased into the Lethe, the river of oblivion. Of these plates only a few resurface and fewer less are saved and brought to the temple of Immortality. Marino specifically refers to Ariosto's text ('e di cento milia che l'arena | sul fondo involve, un se ne serve a pena' *Of XXXV*, 12, 7-8) and to the image of the resurfacing plates. However, while in Ariosto the allegorical meaning, explained by St John, is related to the theme of poetry and fame, in Marino this image assumes an altogether different meaning. The small number of the rescued plates, in fact, does not allude to the few whose names will be remembered for eternity thanks to poets, as in the *Furioso*, but it represents the small number of those who are blessed and worthy of going to heaven. Few are the worthy, Marino argues, because many have abandoned heaven and chosen the 'mondane sponde': the river Lethe, traditional symbol of oblivion, becomes the symbol of the mundane dimension, which makes men forget the divine one. Though he defines Ariosto in utterly negative terms as 'l'Autor de' nostri mali', Marino at the same time reuses and integrates the Ferrarese poet's narrative in his own discourse.

It is noteworthy that in the preceding stanzas Marino illustrates the difficult path to heaven by making reference to the gospel story of the cleansing of ten lepers: of the ten lepers healed by Jesus only one returned to thank and praise him.<sup>474</sup> Similarly, Marino argues that of a group of baptised Christians only a few are worthy of heaven. Thus, incorporated within this discourse, the Ariostan image of the river recalls that of baptism, and Ariosto's narrative takes on a didactic significance analogous to that of the story of

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<sup>474</sup> Luke, 17. 11-19.

the cleansing of ten lepers. Rather than disproved, then, Ariosto's narrative is implicitly associated with the Gospel.

### 13.9 Marino versus Ariosto?

Marino's relation with the object of his rewriting is more complex than the intentions stated in the introductory letter imply. He frontally attacks *Orlando furioso* as dangerous, false and misleading. Within a discourse supposedly based on the complete rejection of Ariosto, however, he not only engages with the *Furioso* but also employs its subject matter in support of said discourse. Only rarely does the *Orlando furioso* figure as textual model, such as in Eve's lament, and the other references to it, which are rather scant, explicitly operate at an interpretive level. Marino quotes episodes and characters in order to advance his argument and reasoning, as in the case of Marganorre and of the murderous women. He sometimes appropriates Ariosto's narrative at a deeper level and reinterprets it from a new perspective to fit it into his discourse, such as the conflicts in Agramante's camp and the defeat of Orrilo. In a sermonising narrative which progresses through images and analogies, the *Furioso* provides characters and episodes whose imagery can be adapted to the narrative by changing their allegorical and symbolic significance.

The practice of allegorical reading and interpretation is a key factor in Marino's adaptation of the *Furioso*, as it is through the use of allegory in religious writings that he rewrites Ariosto. His allegorical rewriting may support traditional readings of this kind, such as in the case of Alcina and Logistilla, but often evolves into a new interpretation, as in the case of Merlin's monster and Atlante's palace. Thus, the *Furioso* provides Marino with images through which he can illustrate and clarify his arguments and abstract concepts. As a result, the *Furioso* becomes a source of images and narratives through which Marino can also represent and elucidate religious tenets and doctrinal points, as his use of the episodes of Norandino and Grifone show.

In terms of the significance of the elements and episodes mentioned by Marino, two in particular play a key role in underpinning his rewriting, namely the madness of Orlando and Astolfo's quest on the moon. It is noteworthy that these are also the central episodes of Ariosto's narrative. Though Marino criticises Orlando for his love for Angelica, he appropriates the theme of madness to the extent that he compares his rewriting to the vial of Orlando's wit. The role of Astolfo is therefore particularly significant as he is the paladin who saves Orlando following the divine design. Thus, Astolfo is mostly mentioned in positive terms because of his divinely providential acts and it is notable that

Astolfo is even referred to once as a symbol of veracity. As a result, the lunar landscape, already distinguished by a strong allegorical significance in the *Furioso*, provides Marino with images that can be easily integrated within his discourse.

Beside these central episodes, Marino evokes others that can be characterised as minor in the *Furioso*; these are sometimes tales which slow and are disconnected from the main narrative (such as the tale of the king of Pavia, the episode of the murderous women etc.). Comprehensively, judging by Marino's choice of episodes, he seems to favour those characterised by a concrete narrative through which he can elucidate abstract principles. This is particularly evident in the case of the episode of Norandino and Grifone, and in the reference to Ariosto's allegorical name plates. In the latter, moreover, the notion that the value of Ariosto's narrative is akin to that of a parable can also be derived from the fact that it follows and is connected to Jesus' cleansing of the ten lepers. The *Furioso* thus becomes an instrument for religious catechising.

Despite the author's explicit criticism, Marino's *Furioso spirituale* is a poem that aims at converting, rather than eliminating, Ariosto's secular narrative, and especially some of its characters and episodes. Marino's operation thus participates in the Counter-Reformation poetics of conversion as defined by Virgina Cox and discussed in the Introduction. Moreover, in his prominent essay on religious literature, Quondam has pointed out that biblical rewritings in verse are correlated to chivalric romances in terms of literary development, and religious poetry in general shares the same linguistic, rhetorical and poetic foundations as profane one.<sup>475</sup> Tasso's coeval rewriting of the *Gerusalemme liberata*, the *Gerusalemme conquistata* (1593), which was written to further comply with Aristotelian rules and Tridentine precepts, is exemplary in this regard: significantly, the main models for the *Conquistata* are the Bible and the religious tradition on the one hand and Homer's *Iliad* on the other.<sup>476</sup> As Francesco Ferretti has pointed out, while in the *Liberata* the Bible features as a literary model among others, in the *Conquistata* it functions as the source of religious authority and absolute truth: by means of the Scriptures Tasso corrects the profane features of his poem and converts it

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<sup>475</sup> Amedeo Quondam, 'Note sulla tradizione della poesia spirituale e religiosa (parte prima), in *Paradigmi e tradizioni*, ed. by Amedeo Quondam (= *Studi (E Testi) Italiani*, 16 (2005)), 127-211 (p. 199).

<sup>476</sup> Torquato Tasso, *Di Gerusalemme conquistata [...] libri XXVIII* (Rome: Facciotti, 1593). On Homer and the Bible as models for the revision of the *Liberata* I refer to Matteo Residori, *L'idea del poema. Studio sulla Gerusalemme conquistata di Torquato Tasso* (Scuola Normale Superiore: Pisa, 2004). On the composition of the *Conquistata* see Tasso, *Gerusalemme conquistata, ms. Vind. Lat. 72 della Biblioteca nazionale di Napoli*, ed. by Claudio Gigante (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2010), pp. xi-xxxii.



into a religious one.<sup>477</sup> Consistently with contemporary literary trends and developments, then, Marino corrects Ariosto's romance by directly criticising and censoring it on the one hand, and associating it with religious and biblical narratives on the other.

Marino's rewriting of the *Furioso* shares some common features with other religious recastings of literary classics. As in the works of Malipiero, Dionigi da Fano and particularly Scanello's *Primo canto*, the source text is heavily criticised, whether explicitly or implicitly, as dealing with an unworthy and profane subject, so that it is often evoked in an antagonising way. Besides criticism, moreover, such rewritings share the purpose of neutralising the negative effects of the source by adapting it to the horizon of religious orthodoxy. However, there are some significant differences. Albeit in different ways, both Malipiero and Scanello maintain some of the rhetorical structure of Petrarch and Ariosto respectively (such as the rhyme scheme): their rewritings are, then, encased within a structure that textually and rhetorically evokes their source. Moreover, Scanello replaces Ariosto's narrative with a new one: the episode of the Fall. On the other hand, despite the choice of the *ottava rima*, Marino does not salvage Ariosto's rhetorical structure and his textual allusions to the *Furioso* rather serve the purpose of evoking specific episodes and characters of the romance. Marino, as discussed above, confronts Ariosto on the level of the interpretation and explicitly reiterates episodes and characters to advance his own discourse, which is independent from the *Furioso*.

Taking into account the censorious urges towards profane literature, including Ariosto's romance, in the aftermath of the Council of Trent, as explored in Part Three, the ambiguity of Marino's approach to Ariosto mirrors the ambiguity of the reception of the *Furioso* at the time. The chivalric romance was regarded as a dangerous text for Catholic morals but too much rooted in the collective memory for its dissemination to be successfully restricted. In inviting his readers to consider the relation between the *Furioso* and its rewriting, Marino in fact indicates how his present re-envisioning derives from the *Furioso* itself. Furthermore, Marino's work is significantly distinguished by the dynamics of marginalisation and integration, change and conservation which allowed the dissemination of *Orlando furioso* in the Sicilian cultural background, as has been discussed in Part Four.

Like Filippi's *Lettere* and Scanello's *Primo canto*, Marino's rewriting integrates the *Furioso* by redirecting its interpretation and adapting it to a new genre and cultural

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<sup>477</sup> Ferretti, 'Sacra Scrittura e riscrittura epica. Tasso, la Bibbia, e "Gerusalemme liberata"', in 'Sotto il cielo delle scritture'. *Bibbia, retorica e letteratura religiosa (secc. XIII-XVI): atti del colloquio organizzato dal Dipartimento di italianistica dell'Università di Bologn, Bologna, 16-17 novembre 2007*, ed. by Carlo Delcorno and Giovanni Baffetti (Florence: Olschki, 2009), pp. 193-213.

horizon. As in the case of Filippi and Scanello, Marino's adaptation is an interpretive act from a posture of critique. Unlike the *Lettere* and the *Primo canto*, though, the cultural horizon of the *Furioso spirituale* seemingly aims at the utter eradication of Ariosto's romance. However, since, in fact, Marino appropriates Ariosto, his attack on the *Furioso* results in reinforcing its narrative, which permeates an entirely alien cultural domain, in a way not dissimilar from how Filippi and Scanello's rewritings also reinstate the romance while manipulating it. It is noteworthy that these rewritings differ in terms of readership and dissemination, although these issues are open to speculation due to the scant information available. In the case of Filippi, the fact that his *Lettere* were published by Varisco, a major Venetian publisher who also published 4 editions of the *Furioso* in the 1560s, is indicative of a wide dissemination that was part of a specific editorial strategy.<sup>478</sup> The intended audience of the *Lettere* most likely included the readers of Varisco's *Furioso*. On the other hand, Scanello's work was directed to popular crowds, given his role as wandering street-singer (as is discussed in chapter 5.2). As for Marino, the little available evidence points to a dissemination of his *Furioso spirituale* in religious environments also outside of Sicily, as we have seen in 13.1. Thus, the failure or success of these works is still uncertain, though it is noteworthy that Filippi's work is mentioned among other literary models by the author of a Seicento collection of heroic epistles.<sup>479</sup>

In conclusion, the relation between Marino and Ariosto is more than simply oppositional. By adapting the *Furioso* to a religious discourse, Marino reactivates its profile from a new perspective: his readers are invited to return to Ariosto and revisit his narrative to compare and contrast it with Marino's argumentation and criticism. In particular, they are invited to review the exegetical interpretation of some of its episodes and characters. Though his appropriation of Ariosto's romance is closer to Sanders' notion of appropriation as hostile takeover, by rendering it suitable and useful for the new Catholic readers eventually Marino's rather redeems the *Furioso*.<sup>480</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> The data on the editions of the *Furioso* is based on edit16. Varisco's was a family business with a wide network and branches outside of Venice. See Domenico Ciccarello, 'Varisco', in *Dizionario degli editori, tipografi, librai itineranti in Italia tra Quattrocento e Seicento*, III, pp. 1041-1045.

<sup>479</sup> Traversi has pointed out the mention of Filippi as a model for writing amorous epistles in the Venetian Pietro Michiele's *L'arte degli amanti* (Venice: Guerigli, 1642); Michiele, *Il Dispaccio di Venere*, ed. by Traversi, pp. 47-51. Michiele's *Dispaccio di Venere* is a collection of heroic epistles belonging to the later baroque genre influenced by Giovan Battista Marino.

<sup>480</sup> Sanders, p. 9.

# CONCLUSIONS

[...]

Ma perché varie fila a varie tele,  
uopo mi son, che tutte ordire intendo,  
lascio Rinaldo e l'agitata prua,  
e torno a dir di Bradamante sua.

*Of II, 30*

The cultural and literary significance of Ariosto's romance has been explored and redefined in light of the analysis of various responses largely unexplored by academic scholarship. The investigation into the dissemination of *Orlando furioso* across genres and contexts where it is dislodged from its romance roots has shown a continuous presence in Southern literary culture that is problematic. Part Two has examined how Ariosto's episodes and characters were tested against the classical model of Ovid; Part Three has explored the religious recasting of the romance in the context of the Counter-Reformation and in relation to the Church's strategy of cultural control; Part Four has brought to light the multifaceted reception of the *Furioso* in Sicily, highlighting the importance of Sicilian academic environments as cultural networks; Part Five has demonstrated the permanence of the *Furioso* in an ostensibly hostile cultural domain. Just as Ariosto interweaves his various narrative webs and threads with each other, so these responses to his romance are woven into a web of reception through the threads of dissemination and adaptation.

Through dissemination and adaptation the *Furioso* underwent significant transformation and manipulation. As demonstrated in Part Two, Filippi's adaptation of Ariosto's characters to Ovid's classical model resulted in their moral and narrative simplification. As Ariosto's text was re-functionalised, altered and manipulated to fit the moralising tradition of the classical model, his characters were restated as exemplary. As discussed in Part Three, Scanello echoed Ariosto's text, and particularly the rhyme scheme, and adapted the romance's core element, the theme of madness, to a new religious discourse. Similarly, as seen in Part Five, Marino adapted Ariosto's characters and episodes to a discourse aiming to illustrate religious arguments, and even compared his own rewriting to the vial of Orlando's wits, as both were necessary to restore what was lost — Orlando's sanity in the *Furioso* and moral sanity in Marino's poem: as in the

case of Filippi's work, the narrative complexity of Ariosto's romance characters was reduced as they became mere *exempla*.

Through adaptation and transformation, the didactic value of *Orlando furioso* is reaffirmed at the same time as it is tested against new genres and discourses. Part Two has shown that, as Ariosto's romance is moralised through Ovid, its didactic value is reinforced. Part Three has argued that, while removing and undermining its romance worldview, Scanello incorporates the *Furioso* into a religious discourse that also evokes Tasso's *Liberata* and makes it a vehicle for a new moralising message complying with Counter-Reformation principles. Part Five has demonstrated that, as Marino's rewriting also incorporates the *Furioso* into a new religious discourse, by referring to Ariosto's episodes and characters to further his own argumentation Marino implicitly endorses, and even promotes, the didactic validity of Ariosto's narrative. As the *Furioso* continued to be charged with didactic validity, these rewritings did not simply build on the success of Ariosto's poem but perpetuated its canonisation.

The permanence of Ariosto's romance problematically rested on the rejection of its romance roots and its subversion. This dynamic already underpinned Filippi's elegiac rewriting, as demonstrated in Part Two, and was more pronounced in the works of Scanello and Marino. As Filippi, Scanello, and Marino appropriate and manipulate *Orlando furioso*, Ariosto's romance moves further and further away from its original worldview, and penetrates cultural domains and discourses that are more and more opposed to Ariosto. As readers were invited to compare and contrast Ariosto's romance with its rewriting, its profile was reactivated while it broke through its original hermeneutic framework, which was grounded in the epic and romance genres. In other words, as the romance was inserted into a new ideological, cultural and literary framework, readers were invited to re-organise the sense of the *Furioso* and re-evaluate its cultural validity. In a process that was particularly promoted by editorial strategies, the reading and interpretation of *Orlando furioso* expanded beyond the traditional genre boundaries of epic and romance. By being associated with — and incorporated within — alien texts, discourses and value systems, Ariosto's poem resisted any attempts to render it culturally insignificant.

The rewriters approached Ariosto's romance with different aims: re-proposing it as exemplary (Filippi), re-directing its narrative in a religious sense (Scanello), eradicating it (Marino). Other personal reasons might also have been at play: in the case of Filippi, his *Lettere* might have been conceived also as a means to showcase his poetic ability and classical knowledge among fellow academicians. Scanello's purpose was likely to be

more concrete and economically motivated given his role as wandering streetsinger and editor. Marino might have wished to engage in the larger literary debate surrounding the epic genre. However, whether they achieved their intended aims is difficult to ascertain and the reasons for their success or failure remain speculative. Of the three rewritings, Filippi's seems to have been the most successful, while the circulation of Marino's was seemingly restricted to religious environments. Further research is required to shed light on the afterlives of the works of Filippi, Scanello and Marino in the Seicento.

The religious rewritings of the *Furioso* have also been considered in relation to its critical reception in the late sixteenth century, which has been shown to be ambivalent. Even though Ariosto's romance worldview inevitably clashed with Counter-Reformation values and religious tenets, and the highly popular *Furioso* posed a danger for the project of cultural control that the Catholic Church sought to implement through censorship and expurgation, his romance was read by some writers through a religious lens and Ariosto was indicated as an exemplary Christian author. The rewritings of Scanello, and especially Marino, reflected this critical dynamic and eventually reinforced the validity of the *Furioso* from a religious perspective.

While in the works of Filippi, Scanello and Marino the relationship with Ariosto's poem is a fundamental mechanism underpinning the rewriting, Part Four has shown that the *Furioso* featured as a reference point in works belonging to a variety of genres, contexts, and environments. The case of Sicily has shown how the multifarious dissemination of Ariosto's poem broke contexts and horizons of meaning. The *Furioso* was altered and adapted as a vehicle of court sociability, its figures and images grafted onto lyrical poetry; it also features as an authority in burlesque poetry and as a model for hagiographic poetry. All these cases indicate a diffused presence of the *Furioso*, which was exhibited to varying extents. The case of Sicily, then, especially illustrates the dispersive and creative force of dissemination. The diverse backgrounds of the authors that have been considered is also significant evidence of this, as Marco Filippi was an academician, Scanello a travelling street singer and editor, and Marino a priest from Messina.

The dissemination of *Orlando furioso* and its adaptation to such a variety of genres and contexts were significantly facilitated by the reception mechanisms that framed its discrepant readings and interpretations. In Part Two, Filippi's rewriting has been related to the literary fashion for elegiac laments as well as the moralising and allegorical interpretation of Ariosto's characters and episodes, showing how his Ovidian adaptation was underpinned by the moralising approach to both Ariosto and Ovid. As discussed in

Parts Three and Five, the religious rewritings of the *Furioso* were influenced by the reading of Ariosto's romance in religious terms. The translation of the poem into images of the art of memory, moreover, allowed for its adaptation in works as different from the *Furioso* as Cumia's lyrical poems, as seen in Part Four, and Marino's sermonising discourse, as noted in Part Five. From this perspective, the original visual representation of some of Ariosto's episodes in a notarial deed is not surprising. Strictly connected with canonisation, the processes of moralised reading and reduction to images of the *Furioso* were crucial in engendering the creative deviations underpinning dissemination and adaptation, even in a work that explicitly negates the moral value of Ariosto's romance such as Marino's rewriting.

The main texts that have been considered are grounded in the dynamics of repetition and transformation, continuity and difference, that are typical of adaptation. Filippi, Scanello, and Marino appropriated Ariosto's narrative, adopting a critical approach that had ideological implications: by this act of appropriation, they reactivated the significance of the *Furioso* and salvaged it. Some features of the romance were recurring objects of manipulation and alteration. Filippi, Scanello and Marino all dealt with the erotic theme and female figures, both extremely problematic issues in the Counter-Reformation period. In Filippi's work, the ambiguous aspects of Ariosto's heroines are removed as they enter the cultural domain of moral exemplarity; in the rewriting of Scanello the female presence is demonised through the association of Angelica with Satan and Eve; Marino, like Filippi, re-evaluates Ariosto's characters and episodes in terms of exemplarity. The theme of madness was also a crucial issue: both Scanello and Marino adapted it to their religious discourses by attributing a moral significance to it from a perspective of religious universality.

All these rewritings depended on the prestige of *Orlando furioso* and on the reader's familiarity with it. They constantly evoke Ariosto's text while displaying its transformation. While the *Furioso* is altered and manipulated, the reader is invited to return to Ariosto in order to appreciate its manipulation and transformation. Filippi invites the reader to reconsider Ariosto's characters as examples of vice and virtues, Scanello to revise the *Furioso* in relation to contemporary religious conflicts, Marino to re-envision the romance episodes as stories and images that explicate doctrinal and moral principles. In so doing, these rewritings did not simply adapt the *Furioso* to suit the authors' agendas but reiterated its didactic validity and significance.

It is noteworthy that these re-envisionings were produced at the time when Ariosto's romance was under critical scrutiny and Tasso's *Liberata* was accepted as the main model

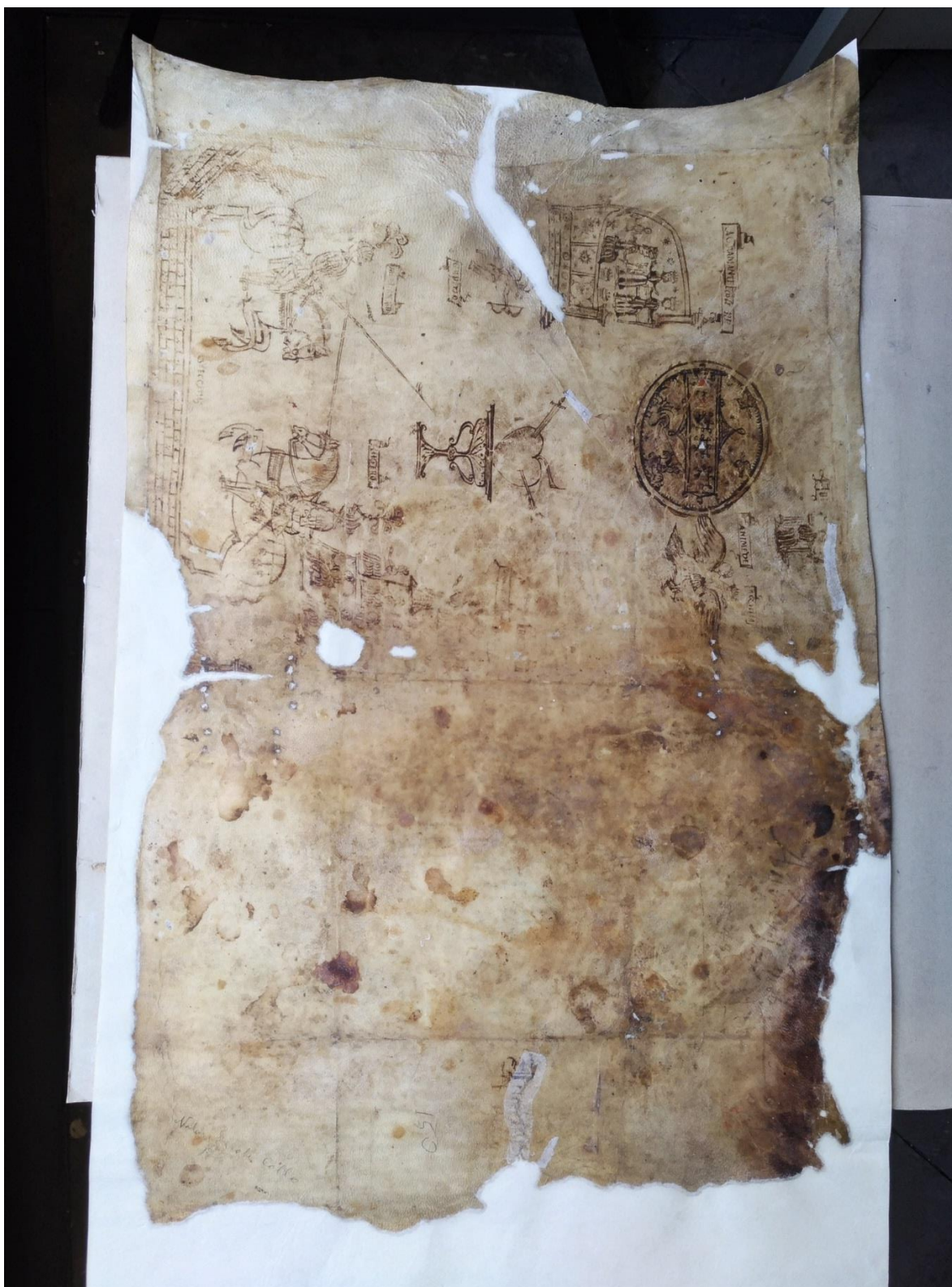
for epic poetry. In Part Five, it has been shown that in Sicilian epic poetry Ariosto's romance was simultaneously marginalised and integrated into poems modelled on Tasso. As this thesis is concerned with the presence of *Orlando furioso* in texts that do not belong to the epic or romance genres, issues related to the sixteenth-century theoretical discussions of heroic poetry and the Ariosto-Tasso *querelle* have been only raised briefly because of their significance in relation to the texts examined. An exploration of these texts in light of coeval theoretical debates, however, might contribute to shed further light on the reception of *Orlando furioso* from a broader perspective. Moreover, the investigation into the dynamics of appropriation and adaptation of Ariosto's romance could be extended to a geographically wider scope in order to map the narrative underpinning its reception more comprehensively, potentially leading to the reconstruction of a geography of reception that brings to light and re-evaluates the different manifestations of the romance among a variety of texts and contexts. From this perspective, investigating the appropriation of Ariosto's romance in epic as well as mock-heroic poems could lead to a reappraisal of the relationship between the two models in more dynamic terms. In addition, further scrutiny of the dissemination of the *Furioso* in the genres of lyrical and burlesque poetry might shed light on the legitimation and subversion the *Furioso* underwent as it was canonised as a vernacular classic.

Ultimately, while Ariosto's romance was criticised, ideologically rejected and marginalised, its value as a productive, culturally validated text was reinforced. The transposition and integration of Ariosto's romance into new literary and cultural domains resulted in the apparent paradox of a hidden, yet recognisable presence. Through the transformation and alteration resulting from its dissemination and adaptation, the canonical status of Ariosto's romance was reactivated, even within cultural and geographical areas where it underwent a process of marginalisation.

The greater web of the reception of *Orlando furioso* in sixteenth-century literary culture still invites further investigation, and the materials that have been examined form but some of its connections. Their analysis has shown that the continued significant presence of the *Furioso* in Southern literary culture was a dynamic and problematic one. While Ariosto's romance was marginalised in favour of Tasso's Christian epic, by means of dissemination and adaptation, his characters, episodes, narrative elements, and sententiousness penetrated alien cultural domains, including discourses that aimed at eradicating it. On the one hand, the *Furioso* was explicitly evoked and exhibited as source; on the other, it resurfaced in a variety of genres and contexts: its status as a classic

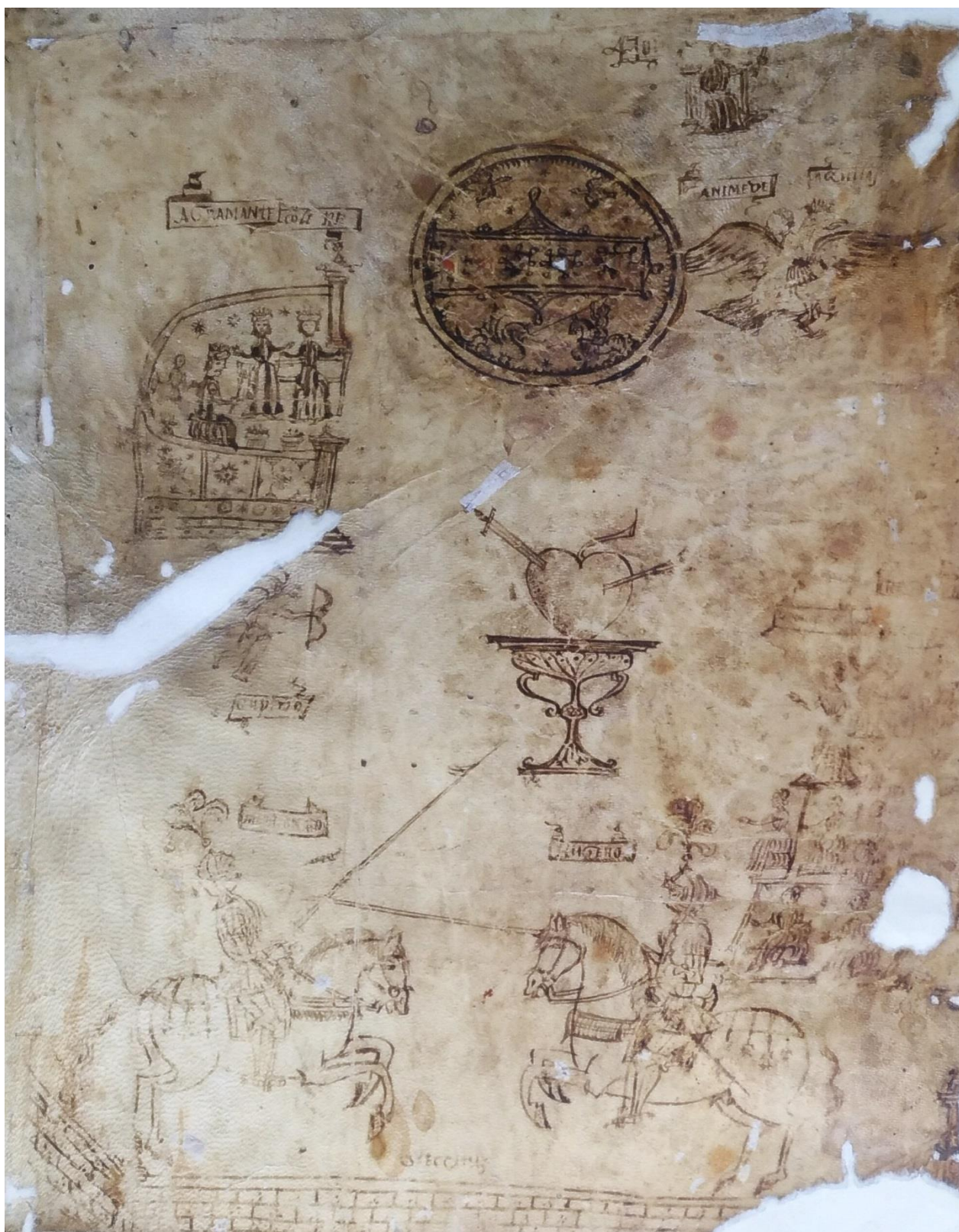
was reinforced at the same time as the romance was altered, manipulated, and ostensibly rejected.





**Fig. 1** Cover of Ercole Collo da Paternò's notarial deeds (vol. 6136, year 1549), *Pergamene ex copertine notarili*, n. 141, Archivio di Stato di Catania.





**Fig. 2** Drawings from *Orlando furioso* on the cover of Ercole Collo da Paternò's notarial deeds.

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